GALLOWGLASS

OR,

LIFE IN THE LAND

OF THE PRIESTS

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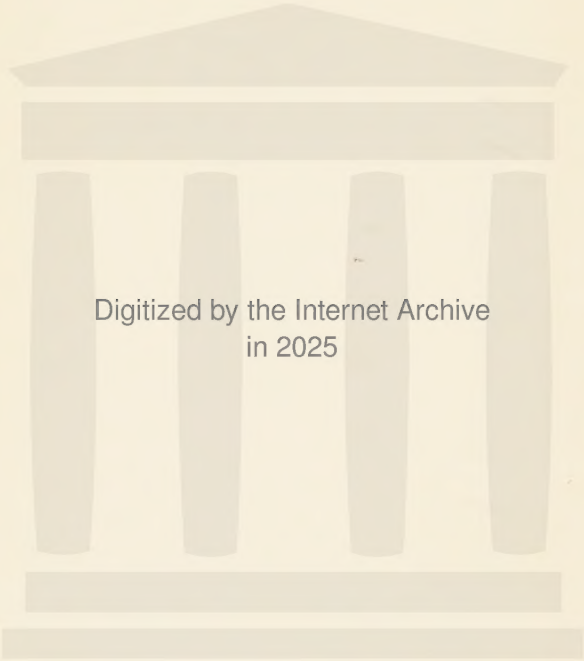
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GALLOWGLASS

FATHER LAWNAVAWLA'S DRIVE

"Father Lawnavawla went for a drive by the waterside in his smart trap to whet his appetite for the banquet. Meeting Maurice Sawnuch's eldest daughter on the road, he invited her to accompany him, and the over-dressed girl proudly consented to do so."—p. 302.

GALLOWGLASS

OR

LIFE IN THE LAND OF THE PRIESTS

BY

MICHAEL J. F. McCARTHY

B.A., T.C.D., BARRISTER-AT-LAW

AUTHOR OF "PRIESTS AND PEOPLE IN IRELAND"
"FIVE YEARS IN IRELAND," ETC.

"And again I was in Britain. . . . And there I saw, indeed, in the bosom of the night, a man coming from Ireland, Victoricus by name, with innumerable letters, and he gave one of them to me. And I read the beginning of the letter containing 'The Voice of the Irish.' And I was deeply moved in heart."—*The Confession of Saint Patrick.*

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INTRODUCTION

MANY of the reviewers who assisted me by their criticisms of my previous works seem to have been more solicitous about the style than the matter of my writings. May I be permitted to say that it is not for the purpose of exercising a literary style, or of displaying my own facilities of expression, that I write my books. Neither is it even my chief object to "amuse," or "interest," or "gratify" my readers, though there can be few authors living who have made more personal friends exclusively through their writings than I have gained through mine.

The majority of those who write at the present day are admittedly purveyors of amusement absorbed in the labours of a fierce competition to please their readers at any cost. I am not a member of that enterprising company. I desire, first of all, to do good to my own Irish people, and thereby make my life of service to the commonwealth of which I am a citizen, namely the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. I expend my time and thought rather on verifying my facts than on polishing my sentences. I ask my conscience the question: Is this presentation of the case really true, is it a verbal photograph of what I saw and heard? I do not put it to myself: Is this presentation likely to please my readers, is it an artistic picture, a well-compounded soporific, independent of truth and fact?

In *Priests and People in Ireland*, two years ago, I gave the public a collection of facts and figures to illustrate the power of the Irish-Roman priests' organisation in the British Isles. In this book I lay bare the work of the priests among the people in detail too

cannot help being what he is. His conduct is contemptible on several occasions; but the symptoms of sterling honesty and good nature, of which he occasionally gives proof, serve to show how hard it is for the innate good sense of a Catholic Irishman to struggle outward from the prison in which his mind is pent up by the dominant priests.

Thomas O'Brile represents a type of Irishman possessing even higher possibilities for good than John O'Dowla. He has advanced further on the road to mental freedom, and has therefore secured for himself and his family a larger share of the fruits of their labour. If he were an Englishman, he would probably amass a large fortune, and become what is called a captain of industry. Mrs. O'Brile represents a type of Catholic Irishwoman which is fast disappearing—a woman full of common-sense, fearing the priests little, but keeping on terms with them for social reasons; possessing none of the book-learning which Irish girls now receive in the convents, but well-mannered, full of true kindness and ample knowledge of the world. Her eldest daughter, Norah, is a type of young womanhood which is also rarely met with now in Catholic Ireland, where, owing to the predominance of convent-bred girls, mental strength is seldom found in conjunction with that physical beauty which is so plentiful, and where religiosity saps female character at every stage of existence.

Julia O'Dowla, on the contrary, represents a type to be found in thousands in the province of Munster. Stuffed with nonsensical ideas about life, full of religious scruples, a prey to all priestly superstitions, a victim to every sacerdotal quacksalver, she only discovers her real human nature by accident, and is thereby saved from a lifelong immurement which would have entailed paralysis alike of heart and brain. Mrs. O'Dowla is a species of woman very common in the south of Ireland. She believes in Heaven, Purgatory and Hell, so implicitly that they assume for her a more impressive reality than the world in which she lives. She literally

believes that the local priests possess the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, no less than the magisterial power of release from Purgatory and commitment to Hell for all eternity. She is saving and industrious by instinct, but all the profits of her work would flow into the coffers of the priests, were it not for the check placed upon her by her husband.

Bugler is a young labourer representative of his class in the South of Ireland. If he had not come under the influence of Thomas O'Brile, he would have grown up a *mauvais sujet*, to swell the ranks of those malcontents who constitute the worst element of Irish society—ignorant people who are alternately petted and scolded, but always deceived, by the priests, always taught to ascribe their want of prosperity to external causes rather than to faults in their own character, the most besetting of which is their lack of industry.

The attitude of the priests towards Secret Societies is, I believe, accurately portrayed in this book. As officers of the most potent Secret Society in the world, they object to all Secret Societies which are independent of themselves, as detrimental to the monopoly of the ecclesiastical Secret Society, and likely to lessen the usefulness of the confessional by limiting the confidence reposed in the confessor by the penitent. Acting from such motives, it is not to be wondered at if, despite their hostility to Secret Societies in general, the priests were loth to endanger their popularity by openly condemning the Society of Irish Valiants.

I have also endeavoured to weave into the narrative an intelligible account of the illegal and parliamentary sides of the Land Agitation, through all the phases of which I lived, and in more than one of whose scenes I was an actor, depicting for my readers the manner of men who were responsible for all the disturbances at home and in Parliament. Bearing in mind the political changes which are now impending, an honest effort to explain the constitutional and unconstitutional elements of the last great Irish Agitation cannot be considered untimely.

But, despite those serious studies of the most difficult of Irish problems, the reader must not be surprised to find a substantial vein of humour and Irish levity running all through this book, which, indeed, would not be a true picture of Irish life if it were wanting in that respect. Roland Glenpower is typical of a class of Irishman which has not yet quite disappeared, though one seldom encounters nowadays that reckless love of sport and practical joking for which Ireland was at one time so famous.

In fine, it is to be hoped that the hundreds of Irishmen and Irishwomen who appear in these pages, however misguided they may be, will be found to be human beings as rational in all essentials, from their own standpoint, as the middle-class and lower-class people in *The Mill on the Floss* or *Nicholas Nickleby*. They represent the most numerous class of Irish folk—the class which does not speak or think in "the pure English" of Burke, Moore, and Goldsmith, but of which it is equally true to assert that its members do not speak or think in "the mere gibberish" so frequently put into the mouths of Irish characters in modern dramas and latter-day novels. With reference to the Irish words which occur so frequently in the text, let me say that they are all spelled phonetically, because the literal spelling would give the English reader no clue to their pronunciation.

MICHAEL J. F. McCARTHY.

October, 1904.

GALLOWGLASS

CHAPTER I

"Dear Carrigaline, with what rapture I've trod,
In the bright days of childhood thy emerald sod."
—M. J. Barry.

Twenty or twenty-five years ago, the period about which this history opens, Gallowglass was a town of exceptional prosperity for the South of Ireland, claiming amongst its unique advantages, that its population was not decreasing and that it possessed a distillery, two flour mills, several corn stores, maltings, and a weaving mill, all of which were managed by Scotchmen.

The comparative affluence of Gallowglass was, not unnaturally, a source of pride to its inhabitants, who never tired of contrasting its repleteness with the penury of the adjacent town of Mahernacrow, so that there was something purse-proud in its very atmosphere which had the effect of killing sociability. Each shopkeeper boasted that "his own four bones" and "his own four walls" were the sole objects of his solicitude. There was so little of social intercourse, that the wives of the shopkeepers hardly ever knew one another personally, though they knew of and about each other with a circumstantiality of detail which was surprising. Whenever the men met, it was on the street-side—or "on the flags," as they themselves called it—in a bar parlour, or at a public fair or market. The women never met, being content with seeing each other at mass, rosary, or vespers, or coming from and going to

these devotions, or driving out with their families on Sundays after last mass.

The observant stranger would be inclined to say that the Gallowglass people, men and women, stared at each other and at every visitor to their town in blatant idleness from one end of the year to the other; but, despite appearances, it was a prosperous Irish town, and, most reliable of all tests, it was considered the best parish in the diocese of Kilmoy. When it so happened that the pastor of Gallowglass had received his appointment from the late bishop, there was generally speaking a coolness in the relations existing between Gallowglass and the reigning bishop. But when, as happily was the case at the date of this history, the pastor was the nominee and *protégé* of the ruling bishop, the friendliest intercourse prevailed between the Bishop's House at Kilmoy and the Parochial House at Gallowglass.

It was impossible for anyone but a parish priest to even approximately guess at the profits and emoluments of the parish of Gallowglass; but that they were considerable was an accepted fact all over the South of Ireland. Some innocent young male reader may exclaim: "Those holy men do not consider the emoluments of a parish, they only think of the cure of souls allotted to them by fate!" And some even more innocent young lady reader may cry out in horror: "Nonsense, what would priests do with money? They have no wives and families to spend it on. They are lonely bachelors who have neither chick nor child. Money would be of no use to them!"

But such ingenuous young folk do not know that priests, as a class, in all ages have been noted for their love of money, despite some few honourable and very-much-advertised exceptions. And the youthful critic may yet learn how more money can be consumed in the upkeep of a bachelor establishment than would suffice to maintain a large family in affluence. When have we ever heard of a bachelor returning any portion of his salary on the grounds that it was too much for his humble requirements? At the present moment the

Bishop of London, with his palace and £10,000 a year, is a bachelor; the Prime Minister, with his handsome salary of £5000 and untold patronage, is a bachelor; the Commander-in-Chief of our Indian Army is a bachelor; the Governor of South Africa is a bachelor.[1] But do we ever hear that the plethoric incomes and perquisites enjoyed by those high bachelor officials are more than they require for their simple wants? Do they not draw as much from the State as if each of them had a large family of growing boys and girls to support? So it is with most of the Irish priests. Much as they get they always have need of more.

Although politics possessed the highest value as a topic of conversation in Gallowglass, they were not regarded as the serious business of life, which was the position assigned to them in Mahernacrow. The parish priest of Gallowglass only took a moderate interest in the long patriotic speeches delivered by the "great orators" on the floor of the House at Westminster, at the League in Dublin, or on platforms in all parts of Ireland, America, and the Colonies. Whereas in Mahernacrow the speeches of Mr. Fireframe, M.P., Mr. MacSwillan, M.P., Mr. O'Martyr, M.P., Mr. James MacCoratry, M.P., and other political heroes were regarded as surpassing Shakespeare, Demosthenes, and Edmund Burke in eloquence; and, in point of authority, took precedence of the Bible—a book which Gallowglass men and women considered it sacrilegious to read.

Want of social intercourse made every well-to-do Gallowglass man suspicious of his neighbour; and every woman in the town was absorbed in the duty of saving "her own soul," when she had neither work nor gossip to occupy her, and was not staring into the Main Street.

Several well-to-do shopkeepers in Gallowglass, and amongst them Mr. John O'Dowla, possessed farms within convenient distances of the town. When in the country, Mr. O'Dowla acted as a farmer, and did not mind having dirty boots, and said: "Show me here a tayskawn[2] o' straw." But it would have been, "Hand me a little straw," when in his shop at Gallowglass,

where he could not have rested easy with a speck of mud on his boots or trousers.

He boasted that he was a self-made man, and it was known to all in the town that if he had been more subservient to his wife's uncle, the late Monsignor Penser, he might have secured for his family a considerable share of that ecclesiastic's wealth. But John O'Dowla delighted in his martyrdom, and, being a man of substantial means, for Gallowglass, he professed to entertain feelings of extreme contempt for those who lived on money made by other people.

It was a fine September evening. The view to westward, down Bullrush Street, just opposite O'Dowla's shop, revealed one of those gorgeous sunsets which glorify the death of summer. John O'Dowla, who had not long returned from his farm, was now standing "on the flags," waiting for the summons to tea. He was talking to a commercial traveller, who would like to have got a settlement of a little account for soap and candles, but who, knowing his man, dared not risk the loss of a customer by asking for payment. He was deferentially soliciting a fresh order for starch, blue, brooms, blacklead, blacking, hair-oil, matches, castor-oil, washing soda, saltpetre, or anything in the chandlery and oil and colour line, required in O'Dowla's emporium. But he interlarded his solicitations with friendly inquiry and plausible conversation.

"Your eldest boy is doing wanders at college, sir. He's the talk of the city. I knows him well be eyesight!" said the traveller, casting his eyes in the direction of a window at the end of the shop, beside which John O'Dowla's second son, Hugh, sat reading.

"Well, sir, he cost me a deal o' money, I can tell you. Education of the kind Ignatius got can't be had without money. Pup, pup, pup!" replied the shopkeeper.

"I believe you, sir," said the traveller insinuatingly; "but education isn't all the battle, he must have the talent in him from some side, aither the father or mother. They're all saying that it was a plucky thing o' ye to sind him to the Queen's College."

"I'm fairly well read myself, in a general way," responded John O'Dowla; "but, see, I'm not what they call a speshalist. Howsomever, I take the liberty o' forming an opinion o' me own occasionally." He smiled knowingly at the traveller, and then went on to say seriously: "There's hardly a thing but I heard tell of, or read of in history, at one time or another, nor a people that ever lived on the uninhabitable globe that I couldn't keep up a conversation about from the Ainshunt Romans and Greeks to the present day. No fear, I never haves to stick me finger in me mouth to remind me not to talk, for fear I'd make a bosthoon of myself. I knows a little of all that's worth knowing, except Scripture, an' that's a thing 'twould be sacrilege for a layman to attempt."

"I often heard it said you could pass it off well in company, sir," said the traveller. "You must be a plucky man to sind the son to the Queen's College against the will o' the clergy."

"There's great opportunities for a body in a town like Gallowglass," said O'Dowla aloud, but he added in a whisper, "The priest to his sanctuary, the woman to her home, the man to his business! He, he, he!"

"There isn't a better town than Gallowglass in the county, and that's a big word, Mr. O'Dowla," said the commercial man, "an' I don't b'lieve they's a better man in it than yerself!"

"I know that meself," said O'Dowla, ostentatiously rushing out to expectorate in the roadway. "Excuse me," he said, "for leaving you, but these flags cost money." So careful was he, in striking contrast to most Gallowglass men, about the flagged side-walk, to pay for which a twopence-halfpenny rate had been struck by the town commissioners.

"The train doesn't start till nine?" suggested the commercial traveller.

"No; not till nine. But you're better off than if you were in Mahernacrow. You have fine smooth level flags in Gallowglass Main Street to aise your legs on, an' when it gets dark, see, the gas lamps in the street will

be lit, besides all the gas in the shops. 'Tis more like a parlour than a street. If a body with corns tried to kill time for a train—if they had such a thing there—or a mail car, or the like, in Mahernacrow, the paving-stones on the side-walks would cripple him; for a body couldn't walk on the road in the dark, an' they haven't a halfpenny dip to light the street with. He, he, he! Pup, pup, pup, pup!" And O'Dowla pulled out his large silver watch.

The commercial traveller drew forth a large gold watch in a manner calculated to excite his companion's curiosity.

"Let me look at that watch," said O'Dowla, seizing it without waiting for the owner's permission.

"Certainly," said the traveller, taking the chain bar out of his vest buttonhole, and handing O'Dowla the watch and chain.

"Begor, 'tis grand, grand entirely. Oh, the weight of it, pup, pup, pup, pup, pup!" said O'Dowla, examining it closely. "I was wanst very anxious entirely for a gold watch, an' happening to be in Cork one day, I asked your proprietor to come with me to buy one at Frennan's, the big jeweller's; an' away we went down the street. Frennan showed us twenty gold watches, every one grander than another. At last he came to wan: 'Look at that!' says he; 'it cost fifty pounds when 'twas bought new two years ago, and 'twas sent here to me for sale by a party in need o' the rhino!'"

Here O'Dowla laughed consumedly, appearing to think the position a very amusing one, and he commenced wheeling round as if to let off his mirth gently, as he added, "The party was wan o' the gentry, I understand!"

"Many are in that case now!" said the commercial traveller, trying to laugh, but, being a kind-hearted man, not succeeding; for the hard times had begun to press upon men of every trade.

It must be remembered that during the 'seventies times were good and most things prospered with the Irish farmers, although the rents they paid were very

high. It would be impossible to exaggerate the extravagance and waste in cash and kind which prevailed amongst the well-to-do farmers in those prosperous years prior to the importation of foreign cattle and agricultural produce, and the disastrous failure of the crops in 1879–81. The waste of bread, meat, milk, butter, and vegetables, and the prodigal consumption of whisky, brandy, and wine, which then prevailed in farmers' houses, was so great as almost to surpass credence.

Ireland was living in a fool's paradise. Irish butter then ruled the English market; Irish beef was first in public favour; Irish pigs regulated the price of bacon in the British Isles; Irish poultry and Irish eggs commanded the highest prices. On most of the large farms the proceeds of the butter alone used to pay the rent and taxes, leaving all the profits derived from the sale of corn and live stock intact save for the small cash outgoings for hired labour. Labour was very cheap, but the labourers, whether indoor or outdoor, were very hardly worked and unfairly treated. If the landlords despised the farmers as inferior beings, the farmers, in turn, looked down upon the labourers and treated them with far less consideration than the beasts of the field. They slept in outhouses upon straw or hay with verminous bags for bedclothes, and were dieted upon potatoes, sour milk, Indian meal stirabout, and a little stock fish.

But the farmers were in difficulties now, and all classes of men suffered along with them; although shopkeepers, like John O'Dowla, having a reserve to fall back on, could still face their creditors.

"The long an' the short of it is anyway," continued O'Dowla, darkening his face and speaking brusquely, as if a forgotten appointment had suddenly occurred to him, "Frennan said that he'd sell it for £15, an' would give me a month's trial, with liberty to return it if I wasn't satisfied. I took it, an' I left me own watch with him, an' I had it here for a month. Well, see, 'twas a grand sight to take it out o' me pocket, and as many used to notice it in the shop every Saturday!

Begob, to make a long story short, it lost, to the best o' me bleef now, ten minutes in the month; but when I took it back, Baker an' Frennan said that it was nothing, an' advised me to keep it."

"An' did you?" asked the commercial traveller.

"No; ah, d'ye see, I had enough of it after the month, an' 'twas nearly as good as if I had it all me life, for divil a wan here but saw it, an' I wasn't half as anxious for a gold watch then as I used to be before. So I said, a, as it, a, lost time, I wouldn't take it! He, he, he! But it was the grandest timepiece you ever saw."

O'Dowla wheeled round, stepped out into the road, wiped his eyes, and said, "So I enjoyed the luxury of sporting a gold watch without any expense!"

"Well, Mr. O'Dowla, 'tis an old saying that while a body can borrow they needn't buy. Any black lead, soap, candles, starch?" said the traveller respectfully.

"Will y' lay me alone, man!" said O'Dowla contemptuously, as if resenting the interruption.

"Any blue, oil, matches, brooms—" continued the salesman.

"Brooms!" interrupted O'Dowla, scowling at him as if he felt insulted.

"Sweets, castor-oil, blacking, whiting, liquorice——"

"I'm bothered from you! Pup, pup, pup! Money is very scarce. Times are very bad."

"Saltpetre, washing soda, cloves, cinnamon, candy?"

"Don't I owe you some money?" asked John O'Dowla.

"Yes, but a very small amount, sir, I regret to say," said the traveller. And his face brightened as he drew forth a bill from his leather pocket-book and presented it.

"Ah! Seventeen pounds, nineteen and fourpence halfpenny! I'll give you a cheque for sixteen pounds even, an' give me a clear receipt," said John O'Dowla.

The traveller's face lengthened.

"I couldn't possibly do it, Mr. O'Dowla," he said.

"I never pay shillings and pence, d'ye see?" said O'Dowla.

"The items are cut very fine, sir," expostulated the traveller.

"What do I care? Will you take the even money?" and O'Dowla made as if he would enter the shop.

"It is a strict net account, sir," said the traveller, "I couldn't even offer to split the difference with you."

"What matter?" retorted O'Dowla. "A clear receipt or nothing. Take a fool's advice an' don't refuse the money."

The traveller was puzzled. He had had a bad day and would make a sacrifice to secure the money. He longed for the cheque.

"I'll pay the nineteen shillings meself, Mr. O'Dowla," he said. "An' I'd lave the pound stand over if you'd give me a fresh order now. I'd like to get something like a fair share o' yer business. As it is, you only gives me a fraction of it. I had a bad day an' I don't like to go home empty-handed."

They entered the shop, O'Dowla going inside the counter, the traveller remaining outside. The cheque book was produced and O'Dowla crossed the draft carefully with a ruler. He first filled in the block and afterwards the cheque, writing the words "fifteen pounds nineteen and elevenpence."

A penny is a small coin, but sometimes it assumes an importance not possessed by gold.

"What are you after doing, sir?" exclaimed the traveller gruffly.

"I always stop a penny for the cheque," said O'Dowla, smiling. "They cost me that. There's no profit."

The traveller, being only an Irishman, lost his temper: "Keep your cheque, Mr. O'Dowla," he said, controlling himself with manifest difficulty. "You must see the governor about this account yourself," and he closed his pocket-book and was taking up his gloves and umbrella; "if you were out since morning like I am, meetin' with put-offs an' refusals at every hand's turn——"

"Is it after spoiling the penny cheque?" asked Mr. O'Dowla, whose temper was fast rising to white heat.

"Good evening, sir," said the traveller, walking off; "I'll tell the governor about the account. If Maher-

nacrow is a poor place itself, the people there aren't as mane as some of 'em in Gallowglass!"

"You damn piper, you!" shrieked O'Dowla. "Come back here! Come here, you ruffian!"

But the traveller had left the shop.

"You impertinent scamp!" shrieked O'Dowla. "Don't ever darken this door again!"

He turned to Mrs. O'Dowla, who came out to say that tea was ready, and commanded her never to give Baker's man an order again "for her life."

"I'll get that fellow discharged," fumed O'Dowla.

"The man was perfectly right; I never heard such meanness!" said his son Hugh O'Dowla, a youth who considered himself a man of discretion and who, having been reading at the end of the shop, had overheard the entire discussion, not excluding the reference to his brother's achievements at College.

John O'Dowla held in his hand a square wooden bagshape, used for making sugar bags. His brow grew black on hearing his son's words, and he raised the bagshape as if to fling it at the offender. But Mrs. O'Dowla seized his arm, saying in a soothing tone: "Sh! Sh! Bonna lath. Bonna lath!"[3]

Then turning to her son Hugh, she said: "How dare you speak to your father in that way, you sir?"

Mrs. O'Dowla's uncle, Monsignor Penser, having disinherited his niece, had devised his entire fortune to his only sister, Miss Hannah Penser, who had been his faithful companion and housekeeper. This old lady was still alive, a prey to all mendicant priests and nuns, to whom she gave liberal subscriptions from time to time for all their projects. She had taken a fancy to her grand-nephew, Hugh O'Dowla, and sometimes sent him an invitation to visit her, which the boy accepted occasionally, but with deep reluctance. Old Miss Penser desired Hugh to become a priest; and, knowing much of the internal affairs of the ecclesiastical organisation, promised her nephew that, if he entered Holy Orders, she would employ her money to secure his rapid advancement.

John O'Dowla's eldest son, Ignatius, had been edu-

cated at an endowed school in Gallowglass, the principal of which was a Church of Ireland clergyman, who had since resigned the headmastership and was now the rector of Gallowglass. Ignatius O'Dowla had now been for some years a student at the Queen's College, Cork, where he had distinguished himself by winning various prizes and scholarships. In sending his son to the Queen's College, O'Dowla had given offence to Father O'Darrell, the parish priest of Gallowglass; but the piety of Mrs. O'Dowla and his daughter, Julia, enabled him to make his peace with the priests; and the treaty had been further cemented by the removal of Hugh O'Dowla from the custody of the obnoxious heretical pedagogue and by his being placed as a boarder at the Diocesan Seminary in Kilmoy.

Having spent two years at that centre of sanctity and learning, Hugh O'Dowla was now at home, a gentleman at large, wasting his time and unable to decide whether he had better become a solicitor, or a farmer, or a Gallowglass merchant. Father O'Darrell was urging John O'Dowla to compel the young man to become a priest, but O'Dowla obstinately evaded the use of either persuasion or compulsion.

"We'll leave everything to Providence, your reverence," John O'Dowla would say to Father O'Darrell when the priest pressed him on the point. "Why didn't you make a priest of him when you had him in Kilmoy? The bird in the hand—He, he, he!"

The boy was distracted, now drawn towards the priesthood by the alluring arguments of Miss Penser and Father O'Darrell, and anon repelled from an ecclesiastical career by the questionings of his conscience, by the continuous denunciations of priestcraft in which his father indulged, by his ingrained love of pleasure, and, above all, by the recollection of his experience of priests in the Diocesan Seminary.

[1] The Right Rev. Dr. Winnington-Ingram; The Right Hon. Arthur J. Balfour; Lord Kitchener and Lord Milner, who fill these positions in the present year, 1904.

[2] Irish for "handful." [3] Better not. Pass it over.

CHAPTER II

"I've piped and played to wife and maid
By Barrow, Suir and Nore,
But never met a maiden yet
Like Brigid bann ma store."—EDWARD WALSH.

LET us follow the O'Dowlas into the parlour where tea has been served. If silence means absence of speech, then it may be said that tea was being taken in silence in the O'Dowla household. But in the strict sense of the word there could be no silence in a room where Mr. and Mrs. O'Dowla were engaged in sucking up hot tea out of their saucers, as noisily as a pair of their own cows drinking distillery wash.

At length Mr. O'Dowla addressed a few words to himself, invoking wrath upon the commercial traveller. And his wife replied deprecating "the impudence o' them whipper-snappers o' travellers with their airs, my dear!"

"How can they be blamed, when a man is thought nothing of in his own house by his own college-reared pup?" said John O'Dowla.

"True for you," assented his wife, "an' well 'twill be for half o' these college-reared gents, if they'll ever have as good a general education as their daddies."

"They's a Mensuration o' mine above stairs that I had when I was learnin' navigation and sundry other things from Danny Dunne long ago," said John O'Dowla, "and the leaves of it are as fresh and clean as if it was only bought yesterday. But—pup, pup, pup, they's no use in talkin'!"

John O'Dowla terminated his remarks abruptly, and was now staring at the parlour door. A well-looking girl, with a tea-rose in her hair and arrayed in a pretty print dress, entered the room. The first cup of tea was

over, and the company were breaking or "topping" their eggs, according to custom, before commencing on the second cup. The girl sighed languidly, without raising her eyes, and seated herself on Mrs. O'Dowla's right.

"Oh! Julia," exclaimed John O'Dowla, looking over his egg which he was noisily sucking out of the shell, as he held it up to his mouth.

"Where did you get the rose?" asked Mrs. O'Dowla.

"Don't ask questions, please, mamma!" said the girl, patting her hair and sitting down to be served, as if she were at a hotel.

"Give her some hot tea, mamma, some hot tea," said John O'Dowla, with the air of one suggesting an original cure for a novel disease, and as if there was something unique in the idea.

But his daughter stared icily at him. "Don't eat your egg that way, papa. It's something awful to see you," she said, administering a severe snub with preternatural calmness.

John O'Dowla's method of eating eggs was only that which was in vogue in Gallowglass, where the process of noisily sucking up liquids, whether in the form of tea, underdone eggs, or buttermilk, was colloquially known as "slugging."

"Don't I slug me tea, an' why wouldn't I slug me egg as well?" said John O'Dowla.

"But you shouldn't. It's fearfully vulgar," said his daughter.

O'Dowla was confused, but he endeavoured to conceal his annoyance by smiling as if he would split his lips, and he "slugged" his second egg as before from force of habit.

"Begor, I always ate it this way!" he said, half to himself.

"Don't overflow my cup, please, mother," said Miss Julia O'Dowla.

"Tse, tse, tse!" sighed Mrs. O'Dowla. "New-fangled fashions for quality folks!"

"Compliments passes whin quality meets," said John O'Dowla.

"Cut my bread very thin, please, Hugh," said Julia to her brother, who was cutting her bread and butter.

"Pass me the butter, mother!" said Hugh brusquely.

"Wait till I chaws me bite," said Mrs. O'Dowla.

"This rudeness is appalling!" exclaimed Julia pettishly.

"Rudeness!" cried her father. Julia sneered and commenced to nibble at the wafer of bread and butter which Hugh had cut for her.

John O'Dowla left the room hurriedly and, after a brief absence, returned, pushing the door violently before him. "Timmy the Coals is outside," said he. "He wants to see the maushthraush,[1] he says."

John pronounced *maushthraush* with a grimace, sticking out his tongue, by way of mimicking Timmy the Coals, and with the idea of breaking the unwelcome news gently.

"Let him wait till I ates me supper," said Mrs. O'Dowla.

"He, he, he! Vee shay morshin, Mrs. O'Dowla," said John, sitting down. But he had hardly seated himself when the black face of Timmy the Coals appeared at the parlour door.

"He, he, he! Come in, Timmy," cried John O'Dowla impulsively.

Timmy accepted the invitation and sat on the extreme edge of a chair. He rubbed his coat sleeve across his mouth several times, as if he would have liked to join the other human animals who were feeding before him.

"What do you want?" demanded Hugh O'Dowla sternly, seeing that Julia's patience was fast breaking down.

"Ye, wisha, a few things you know's nauthin' about, mister Kew. Herself 'll give 'em to me in a minute. Time nuff, lave ye ate yeer bite an' a sup!" replied Timmy the Coals with easy condescension.

"But she won't give them and there isn't time enough! Can't one of the clerks give 'em to you? Or, I'll give 'em to you now myself," said Hugh, indignantly striding

over to Timmy, whom he seized by the coat-collar, saying: "Come out of this! Gwout!"

"Lave me out for peace sake, let yee!" cried Mrs. O'Dowla, getting up, and wiping her mouth with her superabundant check apron.

"I'll gout meself," cried John rising, his mouth all yellow with yolk of egg.

Timmy the Coals remained sitting, as if there was nothing which concerned himself in the disturbance. "Yerrah! Don't ye stir, don't ye stir; ate yeer vittles. I'm in no hurry," he screamed, as if he were in a faction fight, and looked askance at Hugh.

"Don't you stir, John," said Mrs. O'Dowla, "finish your tea."

John O'Dowla sat down instantly with an air of conscious merit.

"Sit down, Hugh," said Mrs. O'Dowla with decision. She was a very portly woman—belonging to that species known as "a fine gross woman" in Gallowglass, where corpulency in middle-aged women was greatly admired and respected.

Mrs. O'Dowla left the parlour, followed by Timmy, who turned to the company and said as he left: "Gintlemen and ladies, an' you, too, Mr. O'Dowla, I mint no 'finee. But me mom, me owld mawth,[2] God rest her, may Heaven be her bed this night, she died last night—I ax God's pardon, 'twas airly this mornin'—and divil be from me but I'm put about a bit over it, an' I wants a few pipes an' tabakky for the wake, on credit, from the maushthraush. She's as nice a corpse is ever ye laid yeer eyes on. She hev a new habit on, med three years ago be herself, mind that for ye. She was washed airly this mornin' and her eyes an' mouth shut be Mrs. Arnill, an'——"

"For God's sake, gwout!" said Hugh O'Dowla, rising to his feet.

"An' I gev Father Lawnavawla five shillins to say mass for the repose of her sowl," continued Timmy, and he added saucily to Hugh: "I'll guine an' gout as it shuits me purpose!"

Julia waved her hand frigidly and continued nibbling, while Hugh seized Tim by the shoulders and forcibly ejected him from the parlour.

When the door was closed, Hugh said to his father: "Don't ever call that fellow in here again. If you do, I'll leave the room instantly."

"I know I would faint if I ever saw that odious brute again, papa," said Julia, without displaying the least emotion.

John O'Dowla smiled. "He, he, he!" but then his face grew black, and he bent his looks on Hugh: "The house is me own, you cur, and he's good enough for you!" Then, turning to Julia, he said: "I'll never again call in that blackguard, Julia, as long as I live; he's a saucy cur. There's something caddish about him, with his 'guine an' gout.' I only called him in a-purpose." [3]

Julia O'Dowla had been four years a boarder at the Mortification Convent at Furzey Valley, and had left school three months ago, it being then considered that she had "finished her education." She was admitted to have acquired admirable manners and an "Englified" accent. She said "gwin" and "gwout," instead of "guine" and "gout" when she wanted to say "go in" and "go out"; and she said "wun" instead of "wan" when she desired to say "one." But, since leaving school, she had not taken kindly to the duties of the shop or household. She had come to the conclusion that the shop was demeaning, and determined to have nothing to do with it or its customers; and she soon afterwards discovered that housework was an occupation worthy only of menials. She subscribed to several young ladies' journals and periodical novelettes, the accumulated back numbers of which were piled under the dressing-table in her bedroom, covered with a piece of holland. Nobody had access to her room except the servant, and Julia always made it a point to be present when it was being made up. She locked her room when she went out of doors, and carried the key with her. Whenever she wanted pocket-money, she walked

inside the counter daintily, and took it from the money drawer.

As the O'Dowlas were not on visiting terms with a single acquaintance, Julia had no society. The greater part of her day was spent reading in her bedroom, with the door locked. When she went for a walk in the afternoon, it was to visit the nuns, by whom she was flattered; or the parish priest, by whom she was petted; or to muse in solitude along the roadsides, nursing the delusion that she was a lady because she had nothing to do and wore good clothes.

Meantime, Mrs. O'Dowla was administering sympathy to the bereaved son, and holding a shanachuss[4] with him in a secluded nook of the large shop. The deceased woman had been a pensioner of Mrs. O'Dowla's, and had received her Sunday dinner and a shilling every week for many years from that good woman.

"God be merciful to her," said Mrs. O'Dowla, with tears in her eyes. "I remembers her as long as I remembers anything. She used to work at me father's place in Ballygrauver long ago, an' when I came to Gallowglass she was wan o' the first people o' me own place to come to see me an' to dale in the shop. Yer father was a fine man, Timmy, an' a good tradesman. But ye were in great poverty when he died. I thought ye'd have to guine to the Union."

Timmy was sobbing. "Iss, ma'am," he said; "an' sure look at meself now compared to me father, what am I oany a coal-hodder, an' he a jiner an' cabinetmaker. We're sunk down to nauthin' in the world, Glory be to God!"

"Give her a dacent wake, Timmy; she deserved it. Did I hear ye sayin' you had mass offered up for her?"

"Indeed an' you did, ma'am," replied Timmy, who was weeping copiously, for he really loved his mother, whom he had looked up to as a high-born lady several degrees above himself. His mother, on her part, had never scolded or corrected him, or forced him to school. He, on his part, used to light the fire for her every

morning and draw the household water from the town pump before he went to his work, and keep her well supplied with "kindling"—the last-named service being the *ne plus ultra* of filial devotion. He used to call for her at O'Dowla's on Sunday afternoons, and escort her home after dinner.

"Well, I'll get another mass said for her at me own expense," said Mrs. O'Dowla. "An, an', don't tell the master about it, but I'll give you all you want for the wake without any charge. You may take pipes, tobaccy, an' snuff, for ould times' sake an' the love o' God. I'm lonesome without yer mother; she always had some news for me of a Sunday, an' while she was alive I had some one to remind me o' me childhood, an' I needn't altogether look on meself as an old woman. Would you believe me, Timmy, but I never looked on Gallowglass as me home? I often cries till this day when I thinks o' Ballygrauver. But I must guine to um. Here's the Pasthur!"

"The sooner you find some useful occupation for yerself, me good gentleman, the better 'twill be for all parties," John O'Dowla said, looking fiercely at Hugh.

"Give me a way of living," retorted his son. "Put a decent sum o' money into my hand, an' I'll gwout the door for ever."

"Who's that in the shop?" cried John O'Dowla, in consternation.

"I declare to God 'tis Father O'Darrell!" said Hugh excitedly.

John O'Dowla jumped up, his mouth full of bread and butter, and going to the parlour door, called out: "Come in, yer reverence! Come in, sir! Take a seat, sir. Will yeh have a cup o' tea?"

"Awe, no, thank ye, John. I'm just after having me own. An' how is Miss Julia, an' Master Owen? But Eoghan [5] is in the black books with me, since he won't obey the call of duty. Ha, ha, ha, ha!" Here Mrs. O'Dowla entered, having given instructions to the shopman as to the quantity of goods to be given to Timmy

for his mother's wake, and which were on no account to be entered in the books.

"Aw, Mrs. O'Dowla, ma'am, be sated. Aw, be seated! Don't lave me, leave me, aw, disturb ye in the layst, in the leest. Ye know me business: 'tis about Miss Julia here, as I was telling ye the other evening," began the priest in his most flattering manner.

"To be or not to be, that's the question," said Hugh O'Dowla indiscreetly.

"That's the question of questions," said the priest, his face assuming a more serious expression, "both for young gentlemen as well as young ladies. But," and he turned to Mrs. O'Dowla, "when we have a highly-finished scholar, like the young master here, we must be particular about what we say."

Father O'Darrell was something of a philologist, and he held that since it was correct to follow the example of the natives in pronouncing the names of places, it was only right to extend that law to words in general. The vast majority of the Gallowglass people said "sated" instead of "seated," "lave" instead of "leave," and "layst" instead of "least"; therefore Father O'Darrell pronounced all such dubious words, first in popular fashion, and then in the manner sanctioned by educated authority, thus at once deferring to local custom, and vindicating his own perfect acquaintance with the usages of polite society.

"Oh! my," said Mrs. O'Dowla, blushing.

"He, he, he!" laughed John O'Dowla, smoothing the wrinkles out of the tablecloth, while, with his eyes bent on the ground, he added: "A boy may be a highly-finished scholar, sir, but learning is not of much practical use unless it will help him along in life to a way of living." Having stated this audacious proposition, John O'Dowla swung his head to and fro like the polar bear in the Zoo, as if expecting something to fall upon his devoted crown.

"Don't spake to me, John O'Dowla, on the point! Don't speek to me!" said Father O'Darrell. "I know me holy religion as curate an' parish priest for forty

years now, and I told you me opinion. Only for your dear girl here I wouldn't spake to you at all. I wouldn't, indeed, speek to you at all!"

"He, he, he, Julia," sniggered O'Dowla, unable to summon up a retort to this dreadful menace.

"Well, me dear child, an' is your mind med up?" said Father O'Darrell to Julia. "Come over here to me!" he added, stretching out his arms. "I need have no doubts of you, me dear."

Julia crossed to a chair beside him, where, to the pride and delight of her mother and the internal but undisplayed satisfaction of John O'Dowla, Father O'Darrell stroked her hair, causing the rose to fall out; chopped her under the chin; and said inquiringly: "Well, me child, an' is yer mind med up to give yourself to the service o' God an' of His blessed an' holy mother for the rest o' yer days? Sure it is, isn't it? Eh? It is right you should take time, teek time, to consider."

"I hope she'll be said by her Father Confessor," said Mrs. O'Dowla, crossing her large hands on her capacious lap.

"Sure, you have the vocation, haven't you, me dear?" asked the priest.

Julia fiddled with her handkerchief, and simpered. Nobody in Gallowglass ever considered anybody else's feelings, and the entire company were staring at her.

"For God an' His holy religion, an' our holy mother the Church," went on the priest, preparing his purple handkerchief for use as he took a pinch of snuff.

"Or a tidy shop, or a good farm, or a doctor, or, maybe, an attorney, or a bank manager," put in John O'Dowla, sticking his tongue in his cheek.

"God alone an' His blessed mother this hour can tell," sighed Mrs. O'Dowla. "Heigh-ho! Gu—vo—gu—deering!"

"God, or the world? 'Tis a fateful choice, a feetful choice, me dear child. But take time. I'll call again and, in the mane time, in the meantime, come regularly to me house wanst a week. I'll be always willin' to

advise y' in any spiritual or theological difficulty, if 'twas only for the sake of Monsignor Penser."

"God bless you, Father, an' may His blessed mother reward you!" ejaculated Mrs. O'Dowla.

"You see, ma'am," continued Father O'Darrell, "there is no use in me going into theology or scripture. But in plain simple words that a child could understand I tell you, as I told your daughter, no one but God and her own conscience can advise her. Aitch, or each an' every wan of us has a special lot assigned or allocated for us by God Almighty from all time. If we adopt, pursue, and follow that lot, calling and evocation, we get, obtain and receive at the hands of the Almighty, through our holy mother the Church, special and innumerable precious graces and aids and assistances which are denied to us in every other sphere of life. Therefore, it is that we must approach the sacraments frequently, pray for light, pray for guidance, pray for direction, pray to God to tell us His holy will or the will of His Church, which manes or means the same thing, and, when we have made up our minds, then to follow that holy and adorable will, to which our own will is as the clay and must be moulded accordingly. Are we for the world, for the husband, the family, the bartering, the money and work of the world? Or are we predestined for the service of God and the holy habit of religion, for chastity, for prayer, for good works, for a life of penance and devotion, but destined to a glorious eternity with the angels and saints?"

"Oh! May Jesus direct us!" exclaimed Mrs. O'Dowla, striking her breast. "Uncle Denis, look down on us!"

"Won't you take a glass o' wine, sir?" said John O'Dowla, who felt that the supreme moment for the administration of a stimulant had arrived, and could only endure a very little in the way of sermons, as behoved a man who thought it sacrilegious in a layman to attempt scripture.

"I'm careless then, John," said the priest. "'Tis fine weather now for the time of year. Heigh-ho!"

Whereat wine, whisky and brandy were produced from the glass cupboard by Mrs. O'Dowla.

"Will I help you, John?" said Father O'Darrell, lifting the decanter of whisky.

"After your reverence," said John. "Every priest christens his own child first."

"How can you speak such nonsense, papa?" exclaimed Julia. "You know that priests cannot have children of their own. Excuse him, Father O'Darrell."

The priest laughed a loud, long, clerical laugh, as befitted a man whom none dare interrupt in his mirth or his argument: "Adopted only, my child, adopted as in your own case! 'Tis a saying as old as the hills. I'm the father of every Catholic child in the parish!" said Father O'Darrell, patting her head.

"Indeed, sir, we heard it said without being gainsaid since our shoes cost fourpence," said Mrs. O'Dowla, laughing.

"An' now, me child, in presence of your father an' of your mother and of your brother, let me advise you to cultivate your holy vocation," resumed Father O'Darrell. "Sure you will, won't you?"

"I don't know what to think, sir," whispered Julia, beginning to cry and looking hectic; "I'll pray to Our Lady of the Seven Dolours."

"Ah, well, very good, very good, me child," said the P.P., helping himself to whisky and water, "the best thing for you to do is to take a little somewhat more time to consider, an' drop over to me at the Parochial House off an' on. There's no hurry, Mrs. O'Dowla, she's young enough, God knows!"

At this the mother wept, saying: "She's only eighteen, sir. What put it into her head so young, I don't know at all, sir. None of our family ever went into a convent, although Uncle Denis was——!"

"'Tis never too late to begin to do good, ma'am," said Father O'Darrell, "an' that's all the more reason why you should have a spouse of the Saviour to pray for the repose of your soul, when it plazes or pleases God to call you."

"It was the nuns at the Convent, I bet you a brass button, that put her up to it. He, he, he," said John O'Dowla.

"Now, now, Mister O'Dowla, be quiet," said Father O'Darrell, after a copious draught; "I'll engage it wasn't the nuns."

"It was Mother Bernard, sir," said Julia.

"Ah!" said her father. "See that for you, now!"

"But," added Julia, "'twas I that asked her to take me for a walk myself."

"Ah!" exclaimed Father O'Darrell, adding in an explanatory way, "For a child to ask a nun to take her for a walk, means to ask the nun's advice."

"Yes, that's it, sir!" said Julia.

"Pup, pup, pup, pup!" said John exultantly, hurling an eggshell into the grate in his elation. "Grand weather, Father O'Darrell," he continued, feeling that after such a victory he need not pursue the topic.

"Splendid entirely," said the P.P. "I must be off up to Wegless's, his wife is bad with anæmia."

"The cross o' Christ between us," said Mrs. O'Dowla, making crosses in the air. "What's that?"

"Ah! It's a complicated affair!" said the priest. "She'll be a great loss to Gallowglass. She was a good warrant to help the poor, most charitable, a most practical Catholic, most attentive to her religious duties!"

"I suppose so, sir," said Mrs. O'Dowla.

"I believe that anæmia, ay, 'tis all wan with sciatica or diptharia or something, all chest diseases, sir?" said O'Dowla, holding the door open for the priest.

But the P.P. did not respond.

"Good-bye, me dear, till I see y' again," said the pastor, patting Julia on the head and kissing her forehead.

"Good-bye, ma'am!" said he, shaking Mrs. O'Dowla's hand. "And in the manetime, in the meantime, I think it would be better to offer up the holy sacrifice of the mass for Julia and for all yeer intentions, an' let you and herself say a prayer at the elevation to ask God to direct ye."

"Thank y', sir, I'll call in to the sacristy a Sunday morning, an' lave me intentions in an ongvelope with the clerk," said Mrs. O'Dowla, bending her knee to the priest.

"Good-bye again, all," said the priest. And turning to Hugh, who in the confusion had been sipping glasses of sherry and munching biscuits, he said: "I won't shake hands with the highly-finished scholar till he makes up his mind to obey the call that God has given him. It was Monsignor Penser's dearest wish that one of his nephews should rise to high place in the Church!"

John O'Dowla affected to smile at this sally, but his wife and daughter stared at Hugh disapprovingly; and Hugh, being most unready in conversation, from want of society, could not make any satisfactory retort, but blushed and stammered unintelligibly.

For a moment the shop door was darkened by the black, broad figure of the priest and then Father O'Darrell sailed out into the street; making his progress along those flags which were the glory of the town, receiving an obeisance from every human being, man, woman, and child, whom he encountered. The Gallowglass shopkeepers stood about their doors darting in and out in the gloom; and, as the P.P. passed, Mr. Sawnuch, the butcher, ran in to tell his wife: "The pastor is gone up to Wegless's as sure as a gun. Weg's wife must be dying. He kem out of Jack Dowla's, so Jack's daughter must be goin' to inter the convent, case in point; or he was hectorin' Jack about the son being at the Queen's College, case in point, too."

Mrs. O'Dowla, washing up the best glass, which had been produced in honour of the priest, was saying loud enough to be heard by everyone in the room, but addressing nobody in particular: "Why then, how lerrned priests have to be for their holy vocation! I often heard me grandmother say there was as much learning in a priest's skull as in a doctor's and an attorney's put together. Me dear uncle Denis, the Monsignor, knew all that was worth knowing. Heigh-ho!"

Hugh smiled with incredulous sarcasm.

"I did, indeed. An' I believe it," said Mrs. O'Dowla, smacking her lips at her sceptical son; "me grandmother was well educated."

"Ah! 'tis all theology, woman. Don't I see it meself?" said her husband. "'Twould be fitter for yer uncle to lave y' some of his manes than to give it all to that little vixen of an aunt of yours!"

"They learn a great deal of many things, but something of everything in college," stolidly continued Mrs. O'Dowla. "The priest for lerr-ning and position like, ranks highest of all, me grandmother used to say, and she knew. Then comes the noblemen and gentlemen by birth; an' officers in the army and navy next; an' after thim the barrister with his wig. The whole of them are gentlemen acknowledged by all. But after that comes those that are gentlemen by Act of Parliament, the doctor, the engineer, and the attorney, though last not least, for he's the biggest rogue an' makes the most money. The priest is above all, no matter how lowly born. Heigh-ho! God be with old times!"

"Ignatius says priests are never gentlemen," said Hugh.

His mother stared at him, and said: "What's a gentleman so?"

"Ignatius says," replied her impertinent son, "that the word means a man with an air, a manner and a modulated voice, according to Jane Austen."

"Wegless'll get married again!" said John O'Dowla, not relishing the topic under discussion.

"He's no better than the rest o' ye, so I spose he will, if God gives him the chance," said Mrs. O'Dowla with a sigh, "but I abominate second marriages! Jane Austen! Ayeh! Yeh, Jane——"

"A man wants some wan to housekeep for him, when he has a house full o' rawgalders o' childern," went on her husband. "Is it an ould cripple he'd get to cook his vittles an' see after his substance? An' if he got a young wan to do it, ye'd make Gallowglass too hot to hold him, with yeer bandles o' tongues, every wan o' ye! The man is under sixty, he's young enough to marry!"

"Ignatius thinks more o' Jane Austen than he does o' Shakespeare," persisted Hugh.

"An' have a second clutch!" said Mrs. O'Dowla sarcastically, in reply to her husband, adding to her son, "What do we care about Jane Austen?"

"Woman!" cried her husband, "confine yourself to ecclaysiastical matters when you opens your mouth, for whenever you laves 'um, you makes a show o' yerself."

"But you should care about a great female observer," said Hugh, addressing his mother as if his father were taking no part in the conversation.

"'Tis well to have wan strong point," said Mrs. O'Dowla, not displeased at her husband's observation. "People that had a priest in their family are qualified to spake about priests an' about what priests know in their sacred calling, which," turning to her son, "is nayther airs, nor manners, nor mojulatin' voices, I assure yee!"

"What?" cried Hugh. "Then they aren't gentlemen!"

"They know how to squeeze money out o' people, the bloody soapers," said John O'Dowla, putting on his hat, and, like all the other Gallowglass rabbits, popping out of his burrow to air himself on the flags and stare at the passers-by. "Pup, pup, pup-pup-pup, pup-poo! Glory be to God for all His gifts an' ——!"

The cat, lying at full length on the door mat, tripped him up at this juncture, and, in his effort to regain his equilibrium, he trod on the terrier's tail, causing the dog to snap and snarl and howl.

"The divvle take you!" said he. "Can't a body put down his leg anywhere but he'll tread on some vermin, either dogs, cats, rats, or cockroaches, in his own house? Pup, pup-pup, pup-poo!"

At last he was safely out in the gloaming.

[1] Mistress. [2] Mother. [3] "In jest," the reverse of "on purpose," which is never used in its true sense. [4] Gossip. [5] Eoghan is the Irish Christian name, which is abbreviated into Owen. It is anglicised into Eugene, of which Hugh is the short form in common use.

CHAPTER III

"Came to my cabin door
And, on my earthen floor,
Knelt by me, sick and poor,
Soggarth aroon."
—JOHN BANIM.

MEANTIME Father O'Darrell made his way to the bedside of Mrs. Wegless, wife of the wealthiest publican in Gallowglass. The stricken woman was gasping for breath, though conscious, and considered herself dying. The priest, having seated himself, heard her confession and administered absolution. In the catalogue of her sins there was not a single offence for which a police magistrate would have considered himself justified in sentencing her to a farthing fine or a moment's imprisonment. But Father O'Darrell, after he had uttered the formal "*Ego absolvo te,*" continued to sit by the bedside with a woe-begone face and a puckered brow like a man who had some serious trouble on his mind.

The stricken woman beheld his perplexity, and imagining it referred to her own case, fell into despair: "Oh, Father," she exclaimed, "say that I am saved! Say it, an' I'll die aisy!"

"No wan can say that for certain," replied the priest with a sigh. "*De essentialibus unitas, de non-essentialibus libertas, de omnibus caritas.*"

"Oh, Father, that is awful! Sure you won't go off again and lave me without a word of hope?" exclaimed Mrs. Wegless, terrified at the sound of the Latin.

"Aren't y' after going to confession an' gettin' absolution? What more consolation do you want? May be you forgot something an' you'd like to confess again?"

"Oh, I would, Father," said the poor woman, trembling with excitement and anxiety.

The priest unfolded his stole, kissed it and replaced it round his neck, and once more the formal confession began, involving a pledge of inviolable secrecy on the part of the confessor and the penitent.

"How much money have you?" said the priest.

"I have four hundred an' fifty pounds o' me own, pickings an' savings unknown to me husband or a living soul, except you and meself, Father."

"An' where is that four hundred an' fifty pounds, me child?"

"'Tis here in the room, Father."

"Well now, me child, and were you goin' to die without disposin' o' that money? Were you goin' to face death with the weight o' that on your soul, clogging it on its journey to the judgment seat o' God?"

"Oh, Father," sobbed Mrs. Wegless, "have I done wrong? Something told me I was making bad confessions all the time! Should I have told y' all about it? Oh, 'twas preyin' on me mind! An' I saw Hell an' the Demons waiting for me."[1]

"If 'twas preyin' on yer mind, it shows you were wrong in keepin' it from the priest. I command you now to tell me all about it, not keeping back a single word or syllable."

"Well then, Father, is that money me husband's property, for 'twas unknown to him I took it from time to time our the shop an' saved it our the housekeepin'?"

"No, not necessarily," said the priest, "it may be yours to do as you like with. But 'tis a delicate case o' conscience. I can't commit meself off-hand. You were in the position of a partner without a regular deed of partnership, but, in a certain case, I might be obliged to order you to make restitution of the money. It greatly depinds or depends on what you're going to do with it."

"Oh, Father," she exclaimed, "I had it settled to give it to me sister, Ellen Pinkerry, who is in sore trouble, to help her to keep her farm at Ballyglanders."

If Mrs. Wegless had been suffered to act on this good intention this book would never have been written, and many misfortunes which befell Gallowglass and its people might have been averted.

"Ha!" said the priest. "If you do so, it is the Earl o' Gallowglass that 'll get the money, an' how much further'll that send you on the road to Heaven?"

"True, yer reverence! God direct me, I thought I was doing everything for the best, but sure I shouldn't have kep me intentions saycret from yer reverence. Oh, me mind is gettin' aisy! Tell me what to do, Father!"

"Well then, as you ask me advice," said the priest, "I'll give it to you, but you're not bound to follow it. If you give that money to your sister 'twill go straight up to the rent office, and will be spent on divilry an' dissipation on the Continent be Lord Gallowglass an' his sons. I can't say that that would be devoting it to the service o' God or for the good o' yer own soul. Sure, 'twould be better for yerself to devote it to the salvation o' yer soul! Sure it would, wouldn't it, me child?"

"Oh, I would give it all to hear it from your reverence's lips that me soul was saved!"

"Well, I can tell you how in my opingun you could spend this money for the glory o' God and His Holy Church, of which you are a faithful child, and have been all your life. Is that what you want me to do, me child? Sure it is, isn't it?" said the priest.

"Oh, it is, it is indeed, Father!" replied the terrified woman.

"Well then," said Father O'Darrell, speaking with great emphasis, "meself an' the bishop are making up a fund for the erection of a new chapel here in Gallowglass, and if you choose to devote this money to the purpose an' hand it over to me here now, I can guarantee to you, not only on me own part, but on the part o' the bishop, whose vicar-general I am, that you're devoting your money to the best advantage for God's honour, for the good o' the Church, and for the eternal salvation of your own soul!"

Mrs. Wegless sat up in bed and drew forth a small linen bag from under the bolster and handed it to Father O'Darrell, heaving a sigh of satisfaction as she did so, as if a great burden had been taken off her mind: "Here, sir! Here, Father! take it an' do as you like with it."

"Thank you, me child," said the priest with deep fervour. "God bless you! God bless you!" And his lips moved in secret prayer, and his eyes were lifted up to Heaven.

A minute's silence supervened, during which the poor woman watched the movements of the priest's lips with incalculable relief, experiencing an ineffable calm in her heart at sight of the man of God engaged in prayer on her behalf.

Then Father O'Darrell opened the bag and counted twenty-two Bank of Ireland notes of £20 each, making £440 in all. "I thought," he exclaimed, "you said you had £450 here, me child, an' I only find £440."

"I forgot to tell yer reverence there's a ten-pound note inside the lining o' the bag," said the poor woman, trembling.

"Oh, God bless you! Very good, me child! An' now, my dear," said Father O'Darrell in a sprightly tone and somewhat brusquely, "aren't y' aiser or easier in yer mind?"

"Oh, sure I am that an' no doubt, yer reverence!" she replied.

"Do you firmly believe in the wan true God and the three Divine Persons? An' th' immaculate conception an' assumption o' the Blessed Virgin Mary?"

"I do, Father. Am I to tell this to me husband?"

"No, me child, it is all done under the seal of the confessional!"

"Very well, Father!" sighed Mrs. Wegless.

"Do you believe in the infallibility of the Pope as head o' the wan true Church?" continued the priest.

"I do, yer reverence!"

At this period the dogma of papal infallibility, which had been decreed by Pius IX. in July 1870, by way of

FATHER O'DARRELL AT MRS. WEGLESS'S BEDSIDE

counterblast and set-off against the unification of Italy in that year, and the consequent loss of temporal sovereignty by the Pope, was much insisted on by the Irish priests. Even Father O'Darrell laid claim to a personal share in the new dogma, and felt that in promulgating the infallibility of the Pope he was in reality asserting his own prerogative of unerring wisdom.

"'We declare, affirm, define, and pronounce it necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman pontiff.' These are the words o' the Church, me child. D'ye b'lieve 'em? Sure you do, don't you?"

"Indeed an' indeed I do, Father."

"Even the wisest English Protestants are coming over to us. It is Cardinal Manning who puts the following words into the Holy Father's mouth: 'I claim to be the supreme judge and director of the consciences of men; of the peasant that tills the field, and the prince that sits on the throne; of the household that lives in the shade of privacy, and the legislature that makes laws for kingdoms. I am the sole, last, supreme judge of what is right and wrong.' These are Cardinal Manning's words about the Pope, me child, d'ye b'lieve 'em?"

"Oh, of course I do, sir!"

"An' you know that I'm the Pope's representative here this minute an' ever an' always in Gallowglass?"

"I know it well, yer reverence."

"Do you believe in the communion o' saints an' the forgiveness o' sins an' the resurrection o' the body an' life everlasting?"

"Oh, I do, I do, as God is me judge!"

"Will y' do all you can for the suffering souls in purgatory, if you recover?"

"Oh, I will, Father, I will indeed!"

"An' have you made a good confession, concealing nothing from the priest, an' are you truly sorry for all yer sins?"

"Oh, I did, Father, I am, I did, I am!"

"Well then, me child, you may make yer mind easy. You're dying, if it is God's will you should die—an' I have seen people recover from worse illnesses—you're dying as you lived, a true daughter o' the Church, an' I ask yer prayers. Pray for me, me child! God bless you! You may rely on seeing God an' His Holy Mother face to face in the mansions o' bliss when yer time comes. I bind meself to say four hundred an' fifty masses for your intentions."

"Glory be to God, I'm better than I was for the last six weeks since I took to me bed," said Mrs. Wegless. "You have done me more good than the doctors and the nurse!"

"Sure, there's nothing troubling you now, my child!"

"I hope I'll have a good large funeral, Father," she replied, sighing; "me dearest wish would be to live to see it."

The priest rose, having placed the little bag in his breast pocket, and shook her by the hand: "Sleep, me child! Sleep an' make yer mind easy. You have made yer peace with God! Yer soul is saved!"

This was the one word of assurance and consolation for which Mrs. Wegless had been waiting for six long weeks, and which she could never elicit from Father O'Darrell, though he had been visiting her daily during all that period.

The priest left the bedside, and when the nurse came into the room she found her patient sleeping calmly. Her disorder had been a nervous one, and the main cause of it was uneasiness of mind respecting the dangers of eternal damnation which she thought she had incurred in consequence of her sins—an apprehension which her confessor could not be induced to set at rest.

"How is she to-night, sir?" asked Mr. Wegless dolefully, as the priest passed out.

Father O'Darrell laid his hand on the publican's shoulder and said: "Yer wife will recover, if it is the will o' God, and I hope it will be His holy will."

Before an hour's time had elapsed, all the gossips in

Gallowglass had it that Father O'Darrell had performed a miracle on Mrs. Wegless, whose case had been given over as hopeless by the local doctors. Nothing else was spoken of that night in the Main Street, which, as usual, was crowded with the adult population of the town. And all bowed reverently as the pastor walked amongst them on his way home with his evening's gleaning in his breast pocket. The white-smocked workmen—some wearing their coats, others without them, smoking their clay pipes—all took off their caps to the priest; the workmen's wives and daughters—some bareheaded and noisy, without cloak or shawl, others with their heads covered up like nuns, waddling along and gossiping as they waddled—all bent the knee to the priest; the boys playing hide-and-seek, fox, stag, wolf, leapfrog, and the girls playing high-gates or singing popular songs, all ceased their mirth while the priest was passing; the clerks, with clean faces, smoking their timber pipes; the shopkeepers, standing singly at their doors or in groups on the flags; the shopkeepers' grown-up sons, in threes or fours, smoking pipes or cigars; all touched their hats to the priest, as he made his way with difficulty to the Parochial House. Progress on "the flags" of Gallowglass on a fine night was not easily made, for there was no rule of the road; and batches of workmen were continually coming into collision, while the children of all ages, running about the legs of the grown people, heightened the confusion.

The noise of the hobnailed, iron-tipped boots of the men as they paced up and down, striking against the flags, had always been a melancholy sound in Ignatius O'Dowla's ears when studying in his room. But it did not appear so to Hugh; and her novelettes provided occupation in the evenings for his sister Julia.

The tramping cadence continued regularly on every dry night until the public-houses closed at eleven. Meantime every man and many women in the promenade, who could afford it, dropped in at intervals to a favourite public-house to get refreshments, and either gave or accepted a treat. For in no district within the

confines of the United Kingdom is home life so little cultivated as in Catholic Ireland. There is neither useful occupation nor friendly society to be found by the hearthside as a general rule, and the evenings, whenever it is possible, are spent away from home. And this is so, not only in the cities and in the country towns like Gallowglass, but even in the rural districts like Glenpowerstown, with whose hereditary chieftain, Roland Glenpower, we shall now pass some little time.

[1] Readers of "Five Years in Ireland" will remember the Cappawhite tragedy.

CHAPTER IV

"Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness."—PROVERBS xiv. 13.

IT was the evening of Saturday, the day on which the weekly market was held in Gallowglass; and, as usual, the town re-echoed with much talk and more drinking. The loudest of the talkers, whether in mirth or argument, was Roland Glenpower. He was also one of the soberest, being remarkable as a man who had never been seen drunk, and he was well known to every man, woman, and child in Gallowglass.

The talk ran principally on Land Acts, landlords and evictions.

"I'm in my farm these forty years, that's to say since I was born," exclaimed Glenpower, as he stood, surrounded by a group of admirers, on the flags before O'Dowla's shop, "an' me ancestors were in it for generations beyond the memory of man. They owned the two parishes, but were wrongfully dispossessed. I have nothing to say against me present landlord; he bought it himself, an' the land is let to me for the valuation, an' no man knows now who took the land from the Glenpowers in the past. But, in the presence of God, if I was to die this minute, and, may God strike me down dead if I tell a lie, mark what I say, if my landlord evicted me, d'ye see, for whatever cause, I'd shoot him dead on the spot in the broad daylight the first minute I sighted him. I say that open an' above board, an' I b'leeve I'm justified before God an' man!"

"Pup, pup, pup!" exclaimed John O'Dowla. Then, buttonholing Glenpower, he said in a stage whisper: "I'd shoot 'em all in one night in a thayoretical way, but I wouldn't personally go as far as you, Roland.

See, don't get excited! The police are very active this evening. Good-night!"

"Police! Active! What's that to me? Amoshta fain, if we had the volunteers—" cried Roland.

"Hush! Hush! I don't like wild talk o' that kind. See, be going, Roland," urged John O'Dowla.

"Where is Hugh?" asked Glenpower, not noticing O'Dowla's outstretched hand. Roland was a brave man, and commiserated John O'Dowla's weaknesses, regarding the timid shopkeeper from the lofty altitude of a fox-hunter, a judge of horses and dogs, a sportsman and a naturalist, a man who spent most of his life in the open air. He liked Hugh O'Dowla, partly because he liked all young things, whether human beings, dogs, horses, birds, insects or fish fry, but especially because the boy, displayed a taste for hounds, horses and hunting.

"Deuce a wan o' me knows what's keeping him!" replied O'Dowla, looking at his watch. "He's out all day at the farm, amusing himself, I suppose, like most of the young gents of the day."

O'Dowla had drawn Glenpower into the shop to communicate his views on landlords, the customers having almost all thinned away. And at this moment Miss Julia appeared treading her unemotional way from her boudoir to her tea.

"Oh! Julia," said O'Dowla, wheeling back and giving her as much room to pass as if she were a mad dog, inanely adding: "This is Julia, sir. This is Julia!" just as if Roland did not know her, and just as he used to say when he held her, a baby in his arms, to be admired by the customers many years ago before the grey was in his hair.

"Hallo! Julia, you're looking slashing!" said Roland, preparing to give her hand a squeeze, as was his fashion.

"Keep off, Roland!" she said, speaking as if he were an abstraction. "The habit of shaking hands has gone out, at least in the rough way you do it. Papa, why don't you ask Mr. Glenpower to tea?"

Remembering that he had just bade Roland good-bye, her father grew confused, and said: "I never knew 'twas

ready. Sure he knows he needn't wait to be asked. Isn't he always welcome?"

"Manners in this establishment are decidedly below par," said Julia, treading onwards and into the parlour, where she sat down to be attended to.

John whispered to Roland: "See here, the pastor is tryin' to take her for a nun. Come in and put some sploder[1] into her, an' help to get the notion out of her head."

Roland's eye twinkled, and, lest Julia should have overheard John's whisper, he said aloud: "I never ate grouse in me life, John!"

Then he laughed and said: "Begor, we may as well take Julia at her word and go in, John." And he walked into the parlour, where his cousin, Mrs. O'Dowla, like everyone that knew him, was glad to see him, and gave him a cordial greeting.

"Where's the jam?" asked Julia.

Her mother could not reply as she would have wished, so she said nothing, but sighed audibly.

"I'll knock for it!" said John, taking up a knife and hammering with its handle loudly upon the wall. "These domestics must be stirred up!"

"Help Roland to some bread and butter, papa, and cut it very thin. I wish Hugh were here to cut mine, as I have decided never to cut bread with a knife for fear of lockjaw," said Julia frigidly.

The maid appeared from the kitchen, in response to John's knock, having had to pass through a section of the shop on her way.

"Main," said Mrs. O'Dowla, "place the jam on the table!" The maid did so, taking it from a cupboard scarcely a yard from Julia's elbow.

"I frequently said that both jam and marmalade should be put on the table on market evenings when strangers might possibly be expected for tea," said Julia, as if soliloquising.

"Lockjaw is a sudden death, Julia!" said Roland. "I had a rattling good hound once that died of it. I was fonder of her than of me eldest son——"

"Don't continue to speak, Roland, or I'll retire," said Julia, not showing the least inclination to do so. "I know what your wife thinks of you. She dislikes your odious taste for dogs as much as I do, and I think it unnatural."

"I know the names of me twenty-six couple of hounds and thirty-five pups; but, Mrs. O'Dowla, if you were to ask me the names o' me childern, before Heaven, I couldn't tell you. That's God's truth as sure as I live! My word of honour, as a gentleman."

John and Mrs. O'Dowla enjoyed this, but on Julia the words fell like hail on a new bonnet.

"It's irreligious and un-Catholic!" said Julia. "I have often protested against it, and I will always do so. If no one else fears God, I at least do; and beasts must not be put before good Catholics in my hearing. More cream, mamma, and do try to give me the clotted portion. The niece of a Monsignor should not listen to such talk!"

"Sovereign judge! John O'Dowla, is this young lady your daughter? Excuse me, Mrs. O'Dowla, but I fear not," cried Roland. And this being a time-honoured Gallowglass pleasantry, the parental O'Dowlas laughed.

"Her mother says she is! Pup, pup, pup!" said John O'Dowla, making circles in the air with his teacup to rouse the dregs. "More tea, mamma!" But, catching Julia's eye, he added: "Punch for the gentlemen, tea for the ladies!"

"Papa, have you no other reason to think that I'm your daughter but my mother's word?" said Julia, staring at him, as if she saw through him like glass.

"The neighbours said so, too, I dare say," said Roland.

"It is infidel to jest on such a sacred subject, Roland," said Julia. "There can be no doubt of my identity. If you doubt, God does not doubt it, and He hears your words! For every idle word, etcetera."

"God preserve us!" exclaimed Mrs. O'Dowla.

"I wouldn't go to Heaven on the last day," said Roland, "if I was told for a fact that there was no foxhunting there."

"I fear you won't get the option," said Julia. "When were you at confession last? I pity Mrs. Glenpower."

"I wouldn't be bothering the priest running to him every minute when I have nothing to tell him," replied Roland.

"You should frequent the sacraments, particularly the sacrament of penance, if you want to be saved from the flames of hell," said Julia, cooling her tea.

"Saucer it, Julia! Saucer it like me!" said her mother, observing her. Julia stared at Mrs. O'Dowla.

"Not if it scalded me, mamma," said she coldly. "I have often begged of you not to do it yourself, but you are hopeless."

Roland laughed aloud, and John ventured on a sickly, "He, he, he!" Mrs. O'Dowla filled her saucer deliberately to the brim, and drank her tea from it as slowly as a wine merchant tasting a dock sample.

"How the mischief could a person frequent the sacraments?" asked Roland, to revive the conversation.

"I pity you, if you are so ignorant of the Christian doctrine," said Julia. "Do you even know what the sacraments are?"

"I may have forgotten them, though maybe I'm as practical a Catholic as people that put up to be very pious. I couldn't bless meself if you put me to it in a hurry out of the season. The best hunter will baulk a fence in July."

"Go on with your tea, Roland; I ask you as a favour to do so. Papa, help Roland to bread, if you please."

"Baptism is wan sacrament anyway," said Roland, "an' no man could frequent that, for a very good reason. The same may be said of Confirmation, nobody that I ever knew got that twice," said Roland gravely.

"True for you, Roland; I remember when I was a lad up for Confirmation an' ould Bishop Murphy, a fine grauver old man, gave me a stroke on the cheek," said John O'Dowla.

"So do I!" sighed Mrs. O'Dowla.

"The Holy Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist," said Julia, "are what you should frequent."

"Stop, Julia," shouted Roland, "you're a learned woman. You're like a flooded pond, so full of learning, wherever we lift a sluice, out you pour! But hear me out; I admit that the two sacraments you name should be frequented, an' I always go to me duty Christmas an' Easter the same as every other man, but the men that go oftener, so far as I see, are mostly sheelahs[2] an' plishpeens![3] I don't trust 'em."

"Or hypocrites and craw-thumpers and altar-scrapers!" cried O'Dowla; but, catching his daughter's eye, he added: "Oh! Julia, pup, pup, pup, pup, poo!"

"Folla me argument out," continued Roland. "There's four sacraments mentioned an' two of 'em can't be frequented. There's three more, for instance, Extreme Unction, nobody would willingly frequent that but a fool: then Holy Orders, they can only go through that once."

"Once indeed. That's true, I know it, for me uncle Dinnis, the Monsignor, God rest him, often told me so!" said Mrs. O'Dowla, feeling that on this indisputable point she might pose as an authority. "Once a priest, a priest for ever! he used to say. I think 'twas according to the orders given be Melkisadeck, or something like that."

"I wish you'd pour out the tea, mamma," said Julia. "And, Roland, as my papa seems preoccupied with abusing his neighbours, cut me a tiny bit of awfully thin bread and butter."

With great gravity Roland cut a slice about the size of a five-shilling piece, and buttered it and gravely handed it to her.

"No, thank you," said Julia. "There is a point at which even gentility will give way before continued vulgarity, and I advise you that you are approaching it, Roland." This was said so imperturbably that Roland could not help admiring her coolness.

"Upon me soul, John, if she's your daughter, you ought to be a proud man. I never saw the Queen, but, in me opingun, an' I vala me pingun, that must be something like what a queen would say to her head

butler. However, Julia, there's one weak point in you, you require feeding like all of us, and I won't starve you." Here he handed her as nice a cut of bread and butter as he could manage to produce with his great rough hands, that were so deft with the reins, whip and horn, but so clumsy with the bread-knife.

"Finish about the sacraments!" said John O'Dowla.

Roland's eye twinkled and he thought, "Now or never to put sploder into her!" Then he said aloud: "Begor, you're right, John, I left wan sacrament out, an' 'tis the pleasantest wan o' the lot, that's matrimony."

John O'Dowla and his wife laughed loudly, the latter saying: "You're a funny man, Roland. It always does me good to meet you."

Julia's vocabulary seemed exhausted after her last effort, and she sat silent, going on with her tea, as if she were a guest at a *table d'hôte*, alone in the midst of strangers.

"Matrimony is lovely in anticipation. But for the expectation of it what would we have done with ourselves till thirty?" continued Roland.

"And what about the honeymoon?" asked John O'Dowla.

"'Tis heaven upon earth. At least it was for me," said Roland. "I got married at the close of the hunting season before the dull summer-time. I pledge you me word, I took the hounds out the mornin' o' me weddin' an' I was late for the weddin', an' the priest an' me wife were waitin' at the altar rails over an hour for me, an' I forgot to tell the best man, a great friend o' mine, that I was going to be married, so he wasn't there. I forgot to buy a ring for me wife an' had to borrow me married sister's at the last moment; 'twas the week after the marriage me wife went into the city to buy one for herself. I sint the hounds on to me father-in-law's where there is a rattling good furze brake, a sure find, an' after the weddin' I got all the guests out on cars and afoot, an' I drew the brake. An', God be praised for it, such music, such ratapang, you never

heard. Talk of choirs at benediction, of bands, of thunder and lightning, they were all rolled in wan in the crashes of music from the hounds in that brake that day. I'll think of it till I die. In fact it flashed through me mind, while I was listening to the bursts of music all around, above, and below me that if it plazed Heaven to call me I would like to die then——"

"On your weddin' day!" exclaimed Mrs. O'Dowla.

"Yes, but the dickens a wan o' me cast a thought on the weddin'!" cried Roland. "They knew, as well as if they were human beings, that we only wanted a find an' a burst in cover, for a long run wouldn't suit the company, and, blow me, if they didn't rattle that fox—we found after 'twas a vixen, but no matter—up and down, in and out, an' over an' hether, in that cover for an hour. I drew 'em off, an' we all went back to the house delighted. I heard 'em all saying that 'twas the grandest way of fillin' up the time before dinner at a weddin' they ever saw or heard of."

"Abominable!" ejaculated Julia.

"Me wife an' meself drove straight home on a side-car, after dinner an' punch an' songs an' dancing, on a fine moonlight night," continued Roland. "Me good hunter, Steel—I sold him after for two hundred pounds—was walking in front o' me ridden by a boy, an' the hounds all around us, before, behind an' on both sides. 'Twas like a triumphant march. I had the girl I wanted 'longside me, and what I liked best on earth around about me. That was my honeymoon. Next day I had the worst headache I ever experienced; a cake or a tart or some jam that I ate must have disagreed with me. So, to make a long story short, matrimony is a sacrament also that can't be frequented, I regret to say. 'Tisn't that I have any fault to find with my present wife, the mother o' six children—it might be seven, I'm not sure if put to me oath. But youth is glorious an' I'd like to be always honeymooning like that."

"No blame to you!" said Mrs. O'Dowla, smiling with pleasure. "But 'twould never be the same again!"

"I wonder you don't mix more in your wife's society,

Roland," said Julia sarcastically, "seeing that your recollections of matrimony are so exhilarating."

"Mix, mix more!" cried Roland. "Young woman, I'm a bit of a naturalist, an' I tell you that a parasite, whether 'tis animal or vegetable, is the most disagreeable companion in the world; so by the man that clings to his wife or the woman that clings to her husband, either he or she—maybe I should say him or her—must be cut away or transplanted to let the other grow!"

"Thank God, I'll never be desecrated by any man in that fashion," said Julia, blessing herself, for she had finished tea.

"Oh! Julia," said John O'Dowla, chagrined at her words, "an attorney or a doctor or a bank manager would be quite different."

"Papa, listen to me once for all. There isn't a man born this minute that I'd marry. I loathe them."

"You are too young to judge, child," said her mother.

"She'll break out yet and be called 'Folla the Min' like Bandy Kate Hyde. She'll never go to Skellig[4] the second year!" said Roland. "She'll make a match in her first Shrove,[4] or her second at farthest."

The O'Dowlas laughed against their will, but Julia rose up, and standing by her chair unruffled, she said: "I am not born for man. I despise marriage as a degradation of the soul to the level of the body. I detest babies as creatures which, but for the aid of our holy religion, would grow up in original sin. No one here will ever see my husband or my baby!"

She vanished slowly from the room, as if she were conscious of neither a past nor a future, impassionate as a piece of mechanism.

When she was gone, Mrs. O'Dowla sighed. John began to scrape the crumbs off the tablecloth with his knife, and Roland said: "Give us a tumbler o' punch. I'm dry after this tea, Mrs. O'Dowla!"

"Pup, pup, pup!" exclaimed John, brightening up at the suggestion, and knocking at the wall with his knife

to summon the servant for the removal of the tea things.

"I'm afeered Miss Julia O'Dowla is a hard nut to crack," said Roland; "but she's young yet, and while there's youth there's hope. 'Tis aisy to give advice, but 'tisn't so aisy to get people to take it. See how long they were advisin' meself to get married before I did so. It makes me laugh when I think o' the trouble o' mind I used to be in. I asked an ould weaver in Glenpowerstown for advice an' I'll never forget what he said to me. 'If ever you're in doubt between two girls,' says he; 'take it fair an' aizy, an' don't do anything in a hurry or you'll make a foopaw. They may both be slashin' cuts,' says he. 'Granted. But let you think of yer own fireside on a winter's night whin the day's work is over; or better still, set down by the fire if the sayson suits, and think to yourself, Which would you rather have, that fine, soft, luscious cut of a fair-haired girl with the double chin an' the swelling breast, settin' there before you, risin', swellin', and growin' year by year, like a great griddle cake; or that other spanking, corky mover, with the dark hair an' creamy skin, with a few freckles like a shake o' nutmeg over her straight nose, with the dazzlin' eyes an' the slinder bust, that 'ud warm the cockles o' yer heart an' rise yer dander in the long evenings? Say that to yourself, an' take the wan you think, after deep consideration, would suit yer fancy best in that spot at that particular time, for 'tis there she'll have to shine or splutter!' That's as near as I can remimber, what Micky Horrogan the weaver said to me."

The O'Dowlas laughed, but presently Mrs. O'Dowla heaved a sigh as she said: "Parients are to be pitied; but, sure we don't meet a girl like Jule every day. She's full o' kimmeens."[5]

While waiting for the punch, Roland said: "Well, nature is wonderful; astounding; amazing; when you look into her! If anyone told me, that a cross between a shrewd fellow like John here, an' a fine soft woman with a game pair of eyes like me cousin Bridget there,

would produce an aristocratic, man-hating theologian like Julia, I couldn't have b'leeved it, though I saw many quair things in me time, for I'm a great naturalist."

"'Tis the nuns an' the priest, Roland," said John.

"May the Queen of Prophets direct her!" sighed Mrs. O'Dowla, placing the whisky, sugar, boiling water and glasses on a tray before the two men.

"Divil be from me, I suppose I may say so much now, but I'll put two glasses o' whisky in the first tumbler, I'm so crushed be Miss Julia. Have y' any objection, John?"

"Not for yourself, certainly; but I never took more than a glass o' whisky in a tumbler of punch in me life!" replied John O'Dowla.

"You're too careful o' yerself," said Roland. "The best o' cared men don't live as long as a half-cared man."

"Good people are scarce, so the bad wans must take care o' themselves," retorted O'Dowla.

"Times are getting very bad," said Roland seriously, as he sipped his punch; "prices falling in every department. Why, 'tis even getting hard to sell trained hunters. Cattle and sheep are down to nothing; potatoes are black from the blight everywhere, corn is light and difficult to save; even turnips and mangels are a bad crop. Evictions will be plentiful this winter. Lord Gallowglass's new agent, Culvert, is, be all accounts, a Tartar."

"Fireframe an' the League will be a match for 'em all," said O'Dowla.

"Time will tell," said Glenpower. "I must arrange with Fireframe not to stop the hunting on me. I couldn't live without it."

They had not been many minutes engaged in serious conversation when Ignatius O'Dowla entered the room.

Mrs. O'Dowla rose to her feet, suddenly exclaiming: "Oh, Naishy, welcome home!"

Glenpower and O'Dowla stood up also, but their demeanour was bashful, as if they did not feel sure of the approval of the newcomer.

John O'Dowla's eldest son was a bright-looking youth of twenty-one, with a dark moustache, good features, and keen grey eyes. He held himself very straight and his expression was over-severe, an inner feeling of conscious superiority to his surroundings making itself too clearly manifest to be in accordance with good breeding. But Ignatius O'Dowla was a young man of high principles and determination, who had no peer amongst the sons of the Gallowglass shopkeepers; and it would, therefore, be unjust to judge him by the ordinary standards, or to attribute his faults entirely to weaknesses in his own character.

"Welcome home, Ignatius!" said John O'Dowla, shaking hands with his son. "What's the best news from Cork?"

"Nothing fresh," replied the young man. "How do you do, Roland? I hope all at Glenpowerstown are well."

"How are you, professor?" said Roland, grasping Ignatius by the hand. "We're talking politics, an' would be glad of some enlightenment from a scholar an' a gentleman like yerself."

"I take little pleasure or interest in Irish politics, Roland," replied the young man seriously, as he withdrew his hand from Glenpower's grasp. "I believe we are on the wrong road in everything essential to a nation's happiness. You know Davis's words:

> 'We've fought too long ourselves among
> By knaves and priests divided.'

I believe it is still so with us. We are like driven sheep. We do not know whither we are going; but the knaves and priests who drive us can see that our destination is Nowhere, for we are travelling in a circle for the benefit of our drivers."

"Is that the language of a true-born Irishman, doctor?" said Glenpower.

"There are three kinds of Irishmen, according to the Spaniards," replied Ignatius, "the Ancient, Anglicised, and Mixed. The Ancient, it is said, descend from the

Spaniards, who, in the reign of Elizabeth, claimed Ireland on the grounds that their ancestors had won our country from the Greeks two thousand years before, and that the Ancient Irish desired to be governed by the Kings of Spain, from whom they were descended!"

"I'm a Norman meself be the father," said Glenpower, "but through the mother I trace me descent to Milesius, King of Spain."

"I can boast no such pedigree," said Ignatius, smiling; "I am an Anglicised, or, if you will, a Mixed Irishman."

"Is it an O'Dowla?" cried Glenpower.

> "'By Mac and O you'll always know
> An Irishman to be!'"

"Well, then, my opinions are those of an Anglicised Irishman," said Ignatius. "I have no admiration for the ecclesiastical politicians of Spain. The invention of the Jesuit does not redound to the honour of Spain. Neither is the deification of the Jesuit creditable to Ireland. But I fear all classes of Irishmen—Ancient, Anglicised, and Mixed—are alike involved in our religious degeneracy."

And the young man left the room.

"He likes a bit o' supper when he comes home of a Saturday night," said Mrs. O'Dowla, sighing. "God direct him! I know no more of what he's thinkin' whin he talks like that, than I used to know what me uncle Dinnis was thinkin' of whin he used to be recitin' his holy office in Latin. Lave ye gout now, till I prepares the table for him."

"Does he come home this way every Saturday night?" said Roland, as he drained off his punch.

"He do then. He do. An' he goes off as reg'lar as clockwork be the first train a Monday morning. He's that particular, you wouldn't believe the half of it if I told you. Lave ye go now, nanim day."[6]

And the men evacuated the parlour without protest.

[1] Merriment. [2] Effeminates. [3] Insignificant fellows. [4] Shrovetide, which is the great marrying time in Catholic Ireland, is the season between Christmas and the beginning of Lent. To go to Skellig means to let Shrove pass without getting married. [5] Tricks; queer ways. [6] In God's Name.

CHAPTER V

"But they racked and they ground me with tax and with rent,
Till my heart it was sore, and my life blood was spent;
To-day they have finished, and on the wide world,
With the mocking of fiends from my home was I hurled."
—JOHN WALSH.

THE Mr. Culvert referred to by Roland Glenpower in the last chapter was the Earl of Gallowglass's agent, and he lived at Gallowglass Hall, a fine residence, picturesquely placed on the banks of the Gallowglass River, about a mile outside the town. Gallowglass Hall was built in the reign of George III., and bore testimony to the refinement and artistic sense of the upper classes in Ireland at that period. The house was advantageously placed at a bend of the river which commanded an enchanting view of Gallowglass Valley, with the town itself in the distance, over which the graceful spire of Gallowglass church rose from a swelling group of chestnuts and sycamores. The lawns sloped gently to the river bank, along which ran a walk and terrace, terminating in a boathouse and landing slip. A graceful, metal foot-bridge spanned the river in front of the house, and established easy communication with the large and well-furnished gardens; while the stables and numerous out-offices were approached by a stone bridge at the rear, which was used for vehicular traffic. The demesne in which Gallowglass Hall stood was five hundred acres in extent. About one hundred acres in the immediate vicinity of the Hall was used as a home farm by the agent, and the remainder was let by auction annually, as grazing land, in small parcels. There was very keen competition in Gallowglass for these Hall grass lands. In many cases the motive for thus obtaining the "Hall mark," as the Nationalists sarcasti-

cally put it, was to win the good graces of the Estate Office, with one ulterior design or other.

The Earl of Gallowglass's agent was the central figure of the town and district. Fifty years before the period dealt with in this history, the Agent was as powerful in Gallowglass as any Pasha in his Pashalik. But latterly that personage's powers and privileges had been much curtailed, and it had now been for some time a moot point whether the Agent or the Parish Priest excelled in point of power and final authority over the inhabitants of Gallowglass.

The decline in the value of money, caused by the vast accumulation of current coin in the hands of manufacturers, merchants, and speculators, had long ago abolished the financial pre-eminence of territorial magnates like Lord Gallowglass. The expenses of luxurious living were, meanwhile, multiplying, and the landlords were at their wits' ends to devise a method of increasing their incomes. They borrowed on mortgage as long as it was possible; then they took to rack-renting; but still they found themselves outstripped in the race for wealth by men engaged in commerce. As a last resource, the lords of the soil were forced to cut down expenses. And the effects of this policy of economy in Gallowglass were, first, the partial abandonment of Gallowglass Castle, quickly followed by its permanent desertion for the past five years; and, second, the compulsory retirement of the old agent, the Honourable Victor de Racques, who used to draw a salary of two thousand a year, besides valuable perquisites and commissions, which made his post worth an additional thousand.

The present agent, Mr. Culvert, had been appointed to the agency at a fixed salary of a thousand pounds, without perquisites, and had to submit his books annually to a professional auditor, as if he were the agent of a mere commercial firm, instead of being the Pasha of an Irish territorial Sultan and Commander of the Faithful. Four hundred acres of the best land were cut off the Hall demesne and let out for grazing. The

entire Castle demesne of a thousand acres had previously been divided into farms, which had been taken up by the surrounding tenants, at rentals that they now found it difficult to pay. A caretaker lived in Gallowglass Castle, and grass and groundsel grew in the porch.

Mr. Culvert had now filled the post of agent for three years, his appointment almost synchronising with the foundation of the Land League. The curtailment of the new agent's discretionary powers, the reduction in his salary and perquisites, the diminished splendour maintained at the Hall, were all facts which went to lessen public respect for Mr. Culvert in Gallowglass at the outset. But, coupled with these initial disadvantages, Mr. Culvert had to contend with the new gospel of extermination, preached openly against all landlords, which was now unhinging the minds of the people to an alarming extent. Gallowglass was one of the quietest towns in Ireland, and had as yet taken no overt part in the agitation. Its people were industrious, and had escaped, so far, the pinch of the general distress. But so dazzling were the false prophecies made by the agitators, that there were thousands of men, even in Gallowglass, who had begun to believe that the millennium was at hand, when no rents should be paid, and when all the imaginary treasures possessed by the Government would be placed at the disposal of the people. The foundations of thrift and industry were beginning to be sapped. Farms were being neglected; and the general fall in prices, instead of being squarely faced by renewed and redoubled industry, was only productive of hopeless indolence and mental distraction. Why improve the farms, when to do so would only lead to an increase of rent? The newly-appointed Land Commissioners[1] were perambulating the country, valuing holdings whose occupants had applied to the Court to have fair rents fixed. Time was being wasted in "the law's delay," and while supineness and distraction prevailed in Ireland, the Danish farmers were laying out their plans for ousting Irish produce from the English market.[2]

"If our land is well tilled, won't the result be that the valuation, on which the 'fair rent' will be fixed by the Commissioners for a period of fifteen years, will be made so much the higher?" That was a query to be heard on all sides in Ireland in the early 'eighties.

Breaking loose from the influence of the landlord and agent, the tenants threw themselves completely into the hands of the political ringleaders. The Irish newspapers had a new birth; they reported the speeches of the agitators *verbatim;* they gloried in the progress of the agitation. The revolution in popular feeling towards the landlords was amazing. The Ballot Act had inspired the voters with courage, and it began to dawn on them that it was by their grace that so many Government nominees sat in Parliament, and forwarded the interests of the landlords there. At several bye-elections which had recently taken place, Nationalist candidates had been returned triumphantly over the candidates of Dublin Castle and of the rent offices.

The position of the land agent in those days was one of danger and difficulty; it may be said without exaggeration that he carried his life in his hand. The situations held by men like Mr. Culvert were especially perilous, for the holders were working under the stern directions of absentee principals, who wanted money, and who judged of their agents' success or failure entirely by the amount of the half-yearly remittances to headquarters.

A curious phase of this agitation was that, despite the high pitch to which the people's hopes were raised in anticipation of great blessings in store for them, the flow of emigration was not in the least diminished. Labourers were difficult to obtain, and their minds being as unsettled as the minds of their employers, it was no easy task to carry out agricultural operations with success. Even the large farmers who possessed a sufficiency of stock and capital, and who gave the closest personal attention to their business, found it no longer possible to work their land to the best advantage, owing to the scarcity of labourers and the diminished amount

of work done by both men and women. The labourers had begun to look with envious eyes on their masters' holdings, and the leaders of thought amongst them, if one may use the expression, were beginning to demand the partition of the farms amongst the workmen. A new Labourers' Act was about to come into operation which gave rise to the wildest hallucinations; and, in many districts of the country, the agricultural labourers had gone out on strike—an unheard-of occurrence.

The moral sense of the population was in a stupor. Things were done or left undone, not because they were right or wrong, but because in the prevailing delirium they seemed expedient. The priests, acting on a concerted policy, gave no guidance, but bided their time, determined ultimately to enhance the power of their own order as the result of the general turmoil. Here the priest was in favour of the landlords, there the priest was in favour of the tenants, but everywhere the priest was acting in what he believed to be the best interests of the priesthood. Those who are acquainted with the course of training which Catholic theological students have to pass through are aware that it was impossible for the priests to behave otherwise, considering the nature of their moral principles, which are always based upon expediency and guided by selfish considerations for the advancement of the clerical organisation. The priests knew their own influence depended entirely upon the possession of the eagerly-sought privilege of absolving from sin and the faculty of thereby ensuring admission into Paradise for the dying. They found that the landlords, who did not believe in their supernatural power, were no less anxious to enter into alliance with them than were the politicians who professed to believe in them. But, as I have said, the priests divided their forces, some ranging themselves with the new agitation, others remaining on friendly terms with the landlords and the Government.

At a later stage of the agitation, when ninety-nine per cent. of the Irish priests found it necessary to side with

the agitators, the situation was saved for "the Church" by their Italian superiors, who openly sided with the British Government and the landlords.

The result for Ireland, as those who have survived the agitation may see for themselves to-day, has been that the Government has been discredited, that the landlords have lost all power in the country, and that the tenant-farmers, though they may possess greater fixity of tenure, are not financially better off than they were thirty years ago, when the three F's[3] were only a figment in a land-reformer's brain. But the priests, on the contrary, having been purchased and re-purchased by both sides, by the agitators as well as by the Government, have enormously increased the power and wealth of their own order, until they now possess almost all that is worth having amongst the Catholic Irish.

Having said so much by way of preface, let us consider the concrete case with which we are especially concerned, and with which Mr. Culvert was now called upon to deal. A farm, comprising one hundred acres of good land, in the townland of Ballyglanders, had been held from Lord Gallowglass for two generations by a family named Pinkerry. The present tenant, Mrs. Ellen Pinkerry, was a widow, whose husband died six years previously, leaving her penniless, except for the stock, crops, and implements on the land. The rent was then considerably in arrear, and if the landlord had distrained for it the assets would not have satisfied a moiety of his claim. In the South of Ireland the tenant did not possess a saleable good-will as did the tenants in the North under what was known as the Ulster Custom, and whenever a fine for possession was paid by an incoming occupier, it went to the landlord and not to the outgoing tenant.

The rent was in arrear everywhere around Gallowglass, even the richest farmers being always indebted to their landlord for a full year, or gale's rent, besides the current half-gale. This universal system of arrears originated in the days when the landlords had abundance of money and could afford to allow the rent to

stand over. Nor was the practice without its advantages for the territorial magnates, inasmuch as this "hanging gale," as it was called, suspended like a Damocles' sword over the tenants' necks, increased the power of the landlord and reduced even the thriftiest tenants to a position of continued subservience. Indeed, if the "hanging gale" were at any time peremptorily called up, its payment would embarrass even the most solvent farmer, and would reduce the average Irish tenant to bankruptcy.

During the six years which had elapsed since her husband's death, Mrs. Pinkerry had only been able to pay half the rent in any single year, so that arrears to the extent of three gales of rent had accumulated, in addition to the three gales which had been in arrear when she was left a widow.

Mrs. Pinkerry had two sons; but they, finding it impossible to work off the accumulating arrears, and possessing no knowledge or business acumen, had abandoned the task in despair and emigrated to America, vainly hoping that they might there earn a sufficiency wherewith to return after a brief interval, and work their ancestral farm successfully. The widow and her daughters struggled on for a year with paid labourers and the manual assistance of their relatives. Whenever a neighbour set off for America, and the event was one of frequent occurrence, the widow's message to her eldest son was:—

"Tell him we're well and happy, thank the Lord;
But of our troubles since he went away,
You'll mind, avick, and never say a word.
Of cares and troubles sure we've all our share;
The finest summer isn't always fair.

"Tell him the spotted heifer calved in May;
She died, poor thing; but that you needn't mind;
Nor how the constant rain destroyed the hay;
But tell him God to us was ever kind;
And when the fever spread the country o'er,
His mercy kept the sickness from our door.

"Be sure you tell him how the neighbours came
And cut the corn; and stored it in the barn;
'Twould be as well to mention them by name—
Pat Murphy, Ned M'Cabe and James M'Carn,
And big Tim Daly from behind the hill;
But say, agra,—O, say I missed him still."[4]

But the day of reckoning, long as it had been staved off, could not be indefinitely postponed; and the auditors having drawn Lord Gallowglass's attention to the arrears on Ballyglanders, the Agent received curt and peremptory orders to recover the amount due by Mrs. Pinkerry forthwith. A writ was issued, and judgment was marked against the widow in the High Court of Justice. It was hoped by Mr. Culvert that some of the widow's relatives, notably Mrs. Wegless, would come to her assistance and raise a sum sufficient to make a substantial payment on account, which would satisfy the auditors and Lord Gallowglass for the time being. But Mr. Culvert's hope was destined to remain unrealised, and the judgment had to be put into the Sheriff's hands for execution. Mrs. Pinkerry's cows were seized and driven into the pound at Gallowglass; but the pound gates were broken open at night and the cattle were spirited back to Ballyglanders. A second seizure was made in which all the beasts on the farm were taken off by the Sheriff's men, assisted by the Gallowglass police; but the cattle were forcibly rescued by a mob, and the officers of the law had to return to Cork with their writ still unexecuted.

In consequence of these and other similar events, popular feeling against Mr. Culvert was growing exceedingly embittered; but the Agent dared not waver until he had gone to the last extremity of British law. He therefore devised a plan in conjunction with the Sheriff, as the result of which he hoped to put an end to the unpleasant situation in which he was placed. He had a report circulated in Gallowglass that the Sheriff would, on a certain day, distrain the cattle of a defaulter named O'Grogan, who lived several miles away from Ballyglanders, and against whom judgment had also

been marked. The result of the false report was that, on the appointed day, all the young men of the country for miles around assembled at the place of the apprehended seizure, with the object of thwarting the administration of the law.

While Mrs. Pinkerry's friends were thus away on a false scent, the Sheriff and his bailiffs, accompanied by an overwhelming force of police, swooped down on Ballyglanders from a most unexpected point of the compass, and carried off all her live stock, horses, cattle, sheep, and pigs, and actually succeeded in convoying them safely to Cork, where they were sold at a sheriff's sale.

Popular indignation now knew no bounds. Mrs. Pinkerry was advised to "keep a firm grip of her holding," and vengeance was decreed against anyone who should venture to step into her shoes by making the landlord an offer for the farm. Her brother, Thomas Quisk; her brother-in-law, David Scarlant; and her nephews, Dick Quisk and Moss Scarlant, were prominent amongst the local ringleaders of the agitation; and the violence of their denunciations of the landlord and agent, and their threats of pains and penalties to be inflicted on potential "grabbers,"[5] threw the whole countryside into a ferment. Being a leaseholder, Mrs. Pinkerry was debarred from applying to the Land Courts to have a fair rent fixed; for the leaseholders were not admitted to the benefit of the Land Act until some years after the occurrence of these events.

Some weeks passed by, during which Mrs. Pinkerry and her daughters continued to occupy the dwelling-house on their deserted farm, and to be held up as objects of public commiseration for the entire parish, when the report was bruited about that the landlord was going to proceed to eviction.

Meantime the Agent, who was obeying orders reluctantly, was forced to execute distraints on several other farms, as the outcome of which he secured more favourable settlements for Lord Gallowglass than he had done

in the case of Mrs. Pinkerry. He now saw no course open to him but to evict the widow; and the symptoms of public opinion which reached him in the Estate Office did not tend to dissuade him from that course. The fact was that the widow's brother, Thomas Quisk, and her brother-in-law, David Scarlant, were making secret offers to Mr. Culvert for Mrs. Pinkerry's farm, one bidding against the other and both offering to pay a fine for possession of the holding, which would go far to indemnify the loss which had accrued to the Earl of Gallowglass. More than one shopkeeper in Gallowglass was also making offers for the holding, the soil of which was excellent and well-watered. When there was such an abundance of eligible tenants, Mr. Culvert was unable to see why he should be censured for taking up possession of the farm from a tenant who could not work it properly or pay the rent regularly.

Of all the competitors for Ballyglanders the Agent regarded Thomas O'Brile, one of the most solvent shopkeepers in Gallowglass, as being the most desirable tenant; and, as Mr. O'Brile was willing to pay a higher rent than either Thomas Quisk or David Scarlant, Mr. Culvert had determined that O'Brile should be the new tenant. But before the most eligible tenant could be put into possession, Mrs. Pinkerry had to be evicted, and that was an undertaking which no land agent could embark upon with a light heart.

A writ of ejectment was obtained, due notice was served, and at length a day was appointed on which Mrs. Pinkerry was to be forcibly removed from the farmhouse into which, thirty years previously, she had come as a bride with a fortune of five hundred pounds.

Meantime Mr. Culvert took the precaution of interviewing Father O'Darrell, and requesting the pastor to use his good offices with the widow to give up possession peaceably.

"Well, Mr. Culvert," said the priest, "I'm against violence and lawlessness of every kind an' description, an', of course, I deplore an' regret this unfortunate, melancholy occurrence as deeply an' sincerely as you

do yourself; but, since Mrs. Pinkerry isn't able to pay her debts, an' since none of her relations will come to the poor woman's assistance, I don't see what other course is open to you an' his lordship but to proceed in due process of law. Sure, herself an' the girls can go to America. What about our own business though, Mr. Culvert? Have you heard anything since?"

"I have had a letter from his lordship about the site for your new chapel," said the Agent, smiling.

"Church, Mr. Culvert! Our place o' worship has as good a right to the title as yer own. We're not dissenters."

"Oh, I beg pardon," replied the Agent affably. "But what's in a name? Your church cannot come into existence without a suitable site, and I think I can almost promise you even a better one than you have been hoping for."

"Very good, sir! We'll be duly grateful to yerself an' his lordship, an' I may pledge the bishop as well as meself," said Father O'Darrell. "I'm the vicar-general, as you're aware!"

"Let me read what the Earl says," continued Mr. Culvert, reading: 'If Mr. O'Darrell ensures you peaceable possession of Mrs. Pinkerry's holding at Ballyglanders, you may promise him that, as soon as the tenant selected by us is put into possession, we shall be prepared to consider his application for a site for his new chapel in Bullrush Street——"

"Bullrush Street! Oh, that would be magnificent! His lordship may rely on me to assist him in all his projects," ejaculated Father O'Darrell. "Bullrush Street is the best site in Gallowglass!"

The Agent smiled under his moustache as he said: "I wonder Wegless doesn't make a proposal for Ballyglanders. Mrs. Pinkerry is Mrs. Wegless's sister, is she not?"

"She is," replied the priest; "but you know Mrs. Wegless has been seriously ill for some time, in fact despaired of, but in any case, if she were not laid up, a—an' invalided, I don't, a—think she or Wegless

would entertain any such thought. Wegless is a rich man, an' whenever I spoke to him about the advisability of taking some land like all the other shopkeepers, his reply to me always was: 'The tierce o' porter is my farm, yer reverence. No wan can rise the rint o' the tierce on me, nor no weather can interfare with the savin' o' the harvest I reaps from it.' Wegless won't ever take a sod o' land. Ha, ha, ha!"

At the same moment that Mr. Culvert was interviewing Father O'Darrell, the parish priest, young Dick Quisk and his cousin, young Moss Scarlant, were closeted with Father Lawnavawla, the curate, consulting with him on the advisability of fomenting a disturbance and organising resistance on the day of eviction.

"I advise ye, but, of course, it is in secret I do so," said the black-haired curate, puckering his low forehead as he thrust his elbows forward on the table. "I advise ye, if ye're sincere Nationalists an' admirers of Mr. O'Martyr, M.P., as I am meself, to organise as melodramatic an' as spectacular a resistance to the crowbar brigade as ye know how."

The Quisks and Scarlants were at one in their determination to keep a stranger out of Ballyglanders, though, as between themselves, they were the bitterest rivals in endeavouring to gain possession of the coveted farm. Both families were now agreed that the more disturbance there was at the eviction, the less desirous would the outside bidders be to raise their offers for what might prove to them a heritage of trouble. The land-hunger, almost as overmastering a passion as avarice itself, had seized upon the Quisks and Scarlants; but as yet they were restrained from a faction fight by the fear that an outsider might step in and carry off the prize. Each being in almost utter ignorance of the other's overtures to the Agent, felt sure of success. Mr. Culvert alone knew the desperate devices to which both had recourse in order to win his good graces, and each had descended to such depths in blackening the character of the other that the Agent entertained feelings of

the most lively contempt for them both, and had determined, as we have said, to give the land to Thomas O'Brile.

Mrs. Pinkerry applied to the Board of Guardians for outdoor relief, and on the motion of Mr. Patrick O'Pollards, seconded by Mr. John O'Dowla, she was granted a sum of six shillings per week.

After the Board meeting, Mr. O'Brile, who was also a guardian, spoke to her and said: "I'm sorry for yer trouble, Mrs. Pinkerry, an' I think if anyone was thinking o' takin' yer farm they ought to make yerself some provision in the shape of an allowance for the remainder o' yer days."

Whereat the widow cried and said: "Nobody belongin' to me will do anything for me, Mr. O'Brile. Me brother and me brother-in-law are fightin' between 'em to step into me shoes, but the last thing they thinks of is doin' anything for me or me poor girls."

"What about your brother-in-law, Mr. Wegless; he's a rich man be all accounts, and maybe he'd do something?" suggested O'Brile.

Mrs. Pinkerry cried. "He'll do nothing for me," she said. "Since my sister took to her bed he has refused me admission to his house. Wegless is one o' the hardest men in Gallowglass."

"An' have Quisk and Scarlant made you no offer?" exclaimed Thomas O'Brile.

"Not a word have either o' them said to me. I assure y' I'm ashamed to tell it to a stranger like yerself; but I'm actually in want of food."

"That's too bad, ma'am," said O'Brile, "but we must be cautious. Would you be afraid to be seen going into my shop?"

"No, sir, not a bit," replied the woman; "many the time I went into it in the good old days."

"I'll go on before you, then," said Mr. O'Brile, "and let you drop in as you're passin', by the way o' no harm." And Thomas O'Brile walked off quickly on his way home.

When the widow appeared in the shop, he called her

into the parlour, and, in presence of his wife, gave Mrs. Pinkerry a present of twenty pounds to tide her over her immediate difficulties, and ensure her and her daughters at least against want of food. The poor woman's heart seemed likely to burst with gratitude. Never before in her life of trouble had she received so handsome or so opportune a present.

"Don't thank me too much, ma'am," said Mr. O'Brile. "I'm goin' in for the farm meself. I want it badly to carry out a speculation I have in view. Have you any objection to me taking it?"

"None whatsoever, sir. I wish you may get it, an' that God may prosper and bless every undertakin' you have on hand. May the prayers o' the widow an' th' orphans intercede for you before the throne o' grace in heaven!"

"So far so good," said Mr. O'Brile. "Now listen to me, ma'am; if I get this farm I'll let you and your daughters remain in the dwelling-house as caretakers, an' ye may live there as long as it suits ye, an' ye can keep all yeer own furniture, an' moreover I'll allow yerself ten shillings a week for yer own life."

When her emotion had subsided, the widow went home with a light heart and told the good news to her daughters, and all three went on their knees and prayed to God and the Blessed Virgin that Thomas O'Brile might be the new tenant of Ballyglanders.

On the day before the eviction, it was announced in Gallowglass by Bessie the Priest, as Father O'Darrell's housekeeper was called, that "his reverence" had left home on important business and would not return for a week. Thus "the Church" washed its hands and renounced all responsibility for the proceedings at the eviction.

On the following morning at eight o'clock twelve policemen, armed with swords and rifles, and heavily encumbered with knapsacks, pouches, and water-bottles, tramped up the boreen[6] to Ballyglanders and drew up in single file in the farmyard. When a few minutes had elapsed after their arrival, the Sub-sheriff and his bailiffs came upon the ground, and, having con-

sulted with Head-Constable M'Petty, the Sheriff went to the front door to demand possession.

Relying upon the negotiations between Father O'Darrell and Mr. Culvert, no serious difficulty was anticipated. Had it been otherwise, a larger force of police would have been present to aid in the execution of the law. But the door was not opened in response to the Sheriff's knocking; nor was any answer vouchsafed to his repeated calls.

Another conference took place between the police and the Sheriff, and it was decided to lift the door from its hinges as quietly as possible and effect an entrance at once. Delay was dangerous, and this course was decided upon as the best for all parties. A crowbar was produced and inserted at the threshold, but the instant the bailiffs attempted to prise the door, a caldron of boiling water was discharged from a top window, and the men hastily retreated, more than one of them being painfully scalded.

"Come round to the back door," said the Sheriff angrily. "We must get in and discover who are our opponents!"

Running at their fastest pace, they rushed upon the back door, and, having forced it open, found themselves confronted by Dick Quisk and Moss Scarlant.

"Are ye resisting the execution of Her Majesty's writ?" said the Sheriff, stepping into the kitchen.

"We're protectin' our aunt an' our cousins," cried Dick Quisk. "Ye're brave fellows to be huntin' sick women our their beds. Mrs. Pinkerry is sick an' can't rise out o' bed; lave ye come some other day."

"I promise to re-admit her as a caretaker if she gives up possession quietly. 'Twill be all over in a minute," said the Sheriff in a tone of expostulation.

"Is it to hunt her out to her death you would, you bloodhound?" asked Moss Scarlant.

"Let me see Mrs. Pinkerry," said the Sheriff. "I have no business with ye."

"You'll not see her, then," said Moss Scarlant, who held a sharp, two-pronged pike in his hand.

At this stage Quisk and Scarlant, seniors, the fathers of the young men, entered the kitchen and counselled their sons to measures of moderation. The fact was that Mrs. Pinkerry and her daughters were locked up against their wills in the bedroom, and were most eager to give up possession.

While the conference indoors was proceeding, an uproar was heard outside; and the Sheriff, on looking out, beheld the police sheltering themselves under a hedge from a fusillade of stones which swept across the yard, being hurled from a copse near the haggard.

Mr. Culvert now appeared on the scene, and as his horse stepped into the farmyard a large stone struck the animal on the head, while a granite splinter hit Mr. Culvert on the arm, causing him to drop his reins and fall to the ground as his horse swerved off. But the Agent was not stunned, and he sprang to his feet quickly and ran to the Sheriff, who was standing at the house-door.

Sore and indignant, he demanded an explanation from the Sheriff, and, when he learned what had occurred, he turned to the Quisks and Scarlants and said: "By what right are you fellows here? Leave the house at once!"

The old men were abashed, knowing that the Agent possessed a full acquaintance with all their underhand proceedings; and they moved off as if to quit the premises. But the young men did not budge an inch.

A momentary pause ensued, and Mrs. Pinkerry's voice was distinctly heard calling from the bedroom: "Open the door, Dick Quisk! Lave us out, lave us out! If that's Mr. Culvert, let his honour know we're in here agginst our wills."

Mr. Culvert forced the bedroom door in and found the three women in tears. Causing the kitchen settle to be drawn across the bedroom door, Mr. Culvert went to the front door and summoned the Head-Constable, who instantly ran across, accompanied by the Acting Sergeant, amidst a hail of missiles hurled by unseen hands.

"M'Petty," said the Agent, "these men, the two

fathers and two sons standing before you, have come here this morning in organised opposition to the law. Both of them have been and are in competition for this farm, slandering each other to me for the past month or two——"

"'Tis a lie!" cried old Quisk.

"'Tis a damn lie for your honour!" cried old Scarlant.

"It is the truth," said the Agent. "Mrs. Pinkerry was imprisoned by them in that room which I have just now broken open. She is perfectly willing to give us possession."

"Leave the house," said M'Petty, "or I'll arrest ye all!"

The four men skulked sullenly towards the door and would have disappeared, had not Acting-Sergeant Drydoss cleverly intercepted them, crying: "Head, lave us execute a bit of a russ, an' hould these till we gets possession."

The Head-Constable agreed to the suggestion, and four constables were summoned to the house, running the gauntlet through a fierce fire of stones in obeying the order.

The four delinquents, tightly clutched by the police, were then thrust forward into the yard, and the policemen took cover behind them while Mrs. Pinkerry and her daughters were giving up possession. The tedious process of putting out the kitchen settle, the dresser, the coop, several four-posted wooden beds and presses, and extinguishing the fire on the hearth took some time, during which young Quisk and young Scarlant made their escape. But the old men and the three women served the purpose of keeping off the fire from the officers of the law until at length their odious duty was performed. Mrs. Pinkerry was then reinstated as caretaker, and left to replace her furniture at her leisure.

When Dick Quisk and Moss Scarlant, having escaped from the constables, reached the shelter of the screen of trees, they were seething with rage, each incensed

THE SLAYING OF THE AGENT'S HUNTER

"Whereupon the desperado drew forth a dagger and slit the good steed's windpipe and jugular vein. The blood pumped forth in a copious stream, and bespattered the entire group as the hunter reared on his hind legs," &c.—p. 65.

with himself and with the other, in consequence of Mr. Culvert's exposure of their subterfuges. They found themselves surrounded by a numerous company, most of whom were young men of their own age, all frantically excited, and as eager for mischief and outrage as they were themselves.

"I have the horse," said a gaunt, long-legged young fellow, leading up Mr. Culvert's bay hunter from the field.

"Begonnies he'll never ride him aggin!" cried a wild-looking man, a tenant under threat of eviction, who hailed from a neighbouring parish. Whereupon the desperado drew forth a dagger and slit the good steed's windpipe and jugular vein. The blood pumped forth in a copious stream, and bespattered the entire group as the hunter reared on his hind legs, and, reeling in a circle, fell off on his side, kicking spasmodically.

To give them their due, Quisk and Scarlant were horrified at the deed: "Bloody ind to yuh, O'Grogan, you spiled all!" cried Quisk.

"Fly, fly for yeer lives," cried the villain who had committed the crime, and he ran off by the side of a fence, as fast as his long legs could carry him.

The group of rioters dispersed, and the execution of the legal process was not further interfered with on that morning. When the widow had been reinstated as caretaker, Thomas Quisk and David Scarlant took themselves off by different paths across the fields; and search was made for Mr. Culvert's hunter.

It would be hard to analyse the feelings of the Agent when he came upon the dead body of his horse. The spectacle was so unexpected that his tongue clove to his mouth, and tears welled up in his eyes. He covered his face with both his hands as he stood beside the dead animal. The policemen also were dumb with horror and amazement; for never before had an outrage on a beast been perpetrated in the neighbourhood of Gallowglass, though such crimes were so prevalent in other parts of the country.

The Agent seemed paralysed. If he had suddenly

come upon his dearest friend lying in a pool of blood with his throat cut, he apparently could not have been more stunned. There lay his splendid bay horse, six years old, stark dead, with his head almost severed from his body, while Mrs. Pinkerry's ducks were feasting on his blood. Mr. Culvert was not an emotional man; but he now seemed completely overcome.

M'Petty ventured to lay his hand on the Agent's shoulder and say: "Don't take it to heart, yer worship! 'Tis a good job it isn't one of ourselves that's lying dead, as it might have been. Glory be to God, all will be for the best yet!"

"M'Petty," began Mr. Culvert, "we have carried out this eviction. It will be the last I shall ever have a hand in. But you're not to say I said so! I must wind up my affairs here, which will take a little time, and it must not be said that I showed the white feather. I have been doing what I believe to be right. But I shall take up some other mode of livelihood henceforward; and, while I remain here, if there are to be any more evictions, they must be carried out without me. Neither of those old knaves that were here today will get this farm. I shall give it to Thomas O'Brile, who is a respectable, honest man."

"The best an' truest man in Gallowglass, yer honour," said the Head-Constable with grave sympathy, and proud of the confidence reposed in him. "But if I was yerself, I wouldn't give in too aisily."

"I'm resolved," resumed the Agent. "Let there be no more about this outrage. I shall have the horse buried where he was killed; and—and I want no prosecutions, no afterclaps about this affair. I shall suffer the loss."

Just as the party were preparing to leave, Mr. O'Brile, accompanied by his son, Edward O'Brile, entered the yard.

"Good morning, O'Brile," said the Agent. "You've come to get possession?"

"Yes, sir," replied Mr. O'Brile, touching his hat.

"We've had a little unpleasantness this morning,"

said Mr. Culvert, "but it is all over now." And the Agent briefly narrated what had occurred.

Then the O'Briles, accompanied by the Agent and Sheriff, returned to the dwelling-house; and once again Mrs. Pinkerry and her daughters left the house while Mr. Culvert was putting Mr. O'Brile into possession.

When this had been accomplished, Mr. O'Brile turned to Mrs. Pinkerry and said: "Mrs. Pinkerry, in the presence of his honour, Mr. Culvert here, an' the Sheriff, an' Mr. M'Petty, I restore you to your house as caretaker for me, and I repeat the promise I already made you to let you and your daughters stay on here as long as it suits yeer purpose, an' providin' ye don't interfere with me in the conduct o' the farm; and, over an' above that, I agree, as I already promised yourself, to allow you ten shillings a week as long as you live. It is better not to have this made public," he added, addressing the witnesses, with that habit of reservation so characteristic of Irishmen, "for fear the Board would stop her outdoor relief. But I have the agreement here drawn up in writing, by Mr. M'Quibble, the solicitor, two copies, wan for meself an' wan for her, so there need be no doubt but that I'm bound by it."

Mr. Culvert's spirits rose at this exhibition of Mr. O'Brile's generosity, and leading the way into the nearest field, he took up a handful of earth from the surface and placed it in Thomas O'Brile's palm, saying cheerfully, "I hereby put you into possession of the farm of Ballyglanders, and I wish you every success!"

"Thank yer honour!" said Mr. O'Brile, rubbing the earth between his palms, "'twill be as God wills."

Then the assemblage broke up, never to meet together again on any common business, having played their several parts in the first act of a tragedy which has not yet been forgotten in Gallowglass, and which is likely to be remembered in the barony of Killafastare as long as Catholic Irishmen continue to glory in their "treasured wrongs."

[1] Under the First Gladstone Land Act of 1881.

[2] During the 'seventies the imports of Danish butter into the United Kingdom were valued at less than a million sterling; in 1901 they had risen to £8,950,497. In 1878, the imports of Danish eggs were only valued at £67,654, but in 1901 they had risen to £1,160,948.

[3] Fair rent, fixity of tenure, and free sale.

[4] Lines by Ellen Forrester, song-writer and native of County Monaghan, born in 1831, died 1883. Her verses possess the unique charm of simplicity and truth.

[5] Grabber was the generic name applied during the Land Agitation to everyone who took a farm from which a tenant had been evicted.

[6] Little road, lane.

CHAPTER VI

"Think her not a ghastly hag, too hideous to be seen.
Call her not unseemly names, our matchless Kathaleen."
—James Clarence Mangan.

In order to understand the progress of events, it is necessary now that we should pay a brief visit to one of the poorest quarters of the Irish capital. Dreg Street is one of those Dublin slums in which, up to about the middle of the nineteenth century, the noblemen, landed gentry, and highest officials of the country used to reside. But, twenty years ago, its mansions had become tenement houses, and the halls which had so often re-echoed with the sounds of revelry and virtuous mirth were filled with the wails of hungry children, the hideous noise of scolding women and drunken men.

The magnificent doorways and lofty windows, which a few short years since had gleamed with a spotless cleanliness, now presented a shocking picture of dilapidation, their panels hacked, pilasters grimy, their fanlights cobwebbed and dust-roughened. All the front doors stood wide open, and bare white patches might be seen in the halls and landings where the plaster had fallen in flakes from the painted walls and ceilings.

There are scores of those streets of tenement houses in Dublin. Most of them are at the unfashionable north side, but many also at the fashionable south side of the Liffey—evidences, according to some authorities, of the fickleness and the want of foresight of the Irish character; monumental proofs, according to others, of the grandeur of Dublin when the city was in reality the capital of a nation.

By a strange coincidence the nucleus of the largest of these degraded areas, the very centre and radiating point of it, is that group of massive buildings, the

National Education Office, and that Greek temple known as the Roman Catholic Pro-Cathedral, in which, at the date of this history, an enthroned Cardinal was wont to have incense offered up before him on every church festival and occasionally on Lord's Day—a not unnecessary ceremony if it allayed the fumes of that decadence with which the locality reeked. Both institutions, educational and religious, worked hand in hand, and seemed, in contrast with their surroundings, like enormous and succulent rhubarbs in a hotbed of manure.

A casual visitor to the Pro-Cathedral at one of the special ceremonials could not fail to notice the contrast between the actors within the altar rails of brass and marble and the bulk of the audience in the aisles and transepts. The rich carpet inside the rails emphasised the bareness of the flags outside. The sleek, surpliced priests, gliding noiselessly up and down the carpeted altar-steps, with many bows and genuflections, might be seen offering up incense in equal proportions to their God and to each other, but in vastly greater quantities to the apparently semi-divine Cardinal. Outside the rail, were gathered hundreds of haggard, half-fed women, and shabby, threadbare men, worn down by misery, the result of their own ignorance; and numbers of barefooted children, growing up like their parents, no hope for them apparently—believing that their misery was a mark of the Divine esteem and a sure promise of eternal beatitude.

All distinction of sex, all modesty, had deserted the luckless dwellers in those Dublin tenement streets, even twenty years ago. If one peeped into any of the tenements one might behold scenes similar to those in the particular house in Dreg Street with which we are concerned. In that house a grimy coal-porter, who lived in the dining-room of the mansion, where beaded wine used to circulate freely on the well-burnished mahogany in the after-dinner fire-glow, might be seen undressing himself with unconcern, while the wife of the rags-and-bones man, who occupied the study, was beseeching a loan of half-a-loaf of bread. His coal-crusted face had long for-

gotten how to blush, and, semi-inebriated, he tumbled in sheer exhaustion into his rickety bed, of which the sheets were patched-up coal-sacks, and the bed-clothes a nondescript mass of rags and remnants, the original uses of which had long been undiscoverable. That was the only bed visible for the coal-porter, his wife and five children who lived in that once noble apartment with its circular bay window, its remains of a rich and artistic dado, its soiled, ornate cornices and painted ceiling.

The public journals of Dublin contain the history of Dreg Street as it was twenty years ago and as it is to-day: "Last evening shortly after four o'clock Mr. Coroner F. held an inquest on the body of Laurence B., a child aged two months, for the causing the death of whom at their place, on Saturday night last, the parents are at present in the custody of the police. The child was buried at an early hour on Wednesday morning, and, by an order of the Coroner, the body was exhumed yesterday and conveyed to the Morgue, to have an inquest held. Eliza S., an old woman, stated that the parents of the child lived in the same house with her, in a back room. They were only two or three months in the house. They had only *one bed* in the room, and the *whole family, the husband, wife, and four children occupied the one bed.* The Inspector, in reply to the Coroner, said the insurance policies found in the room would show the ages. The children were aged 13 years, 6 years, 5 years, and 2 months."[1]

Next day, perhaps, the public will be informed that: "Thomas H. and his wife, Kate H., were charged at the Police Courts, by Inspector D., with having caused the death of their child, Thomas, aged fifteen weeks, by overlying it in bed between 12.30 A.M. and 7 A.M. on the 6th inst. Thomas H. said he had been working during the week, and left off at one o'clock on Saturday. He took some drink during the afternoon, and about 12 o'clock that night he went to bed under the influence of drink. He lay at the foot of the bed. His wife and three children, including the deceased, were in the same bed with him. He remembered nothing more until 7

o'clock next morning, when he heard his wife scream. She said: 'Tom, I think the baby is dead or dying.' He got out of bed immediately and took the baby to Mercer's hospital. Thomas H., asked did he know the cause of death, said he believed either of them must have smothered it, and that it was a fine little child."[2]

The practice of insuring the lives of infants is very prevalent in Dreg Street, and the rate of infant mortality is excessively high. All through the summer, the denizens of such streets spend most of the hours of darkness out-of-doors, the women sitting huddled on the doorsteps or in the hall; gossiping, cursing, laughing, shrieking; while the children sleep on their laps, or stretch beside them on the stone steps or on the floors of the halls; and on such nights the unwary pedestrian who happens to pass through Dreg Street runs considerable risk of being assaulted and robbed.

As soon as the children are able to walk, the lazy, half-naked mothers send them to the public-houses to bring home tins of porter; and the infants learn to sip it on the way. Batches of bare-breasted women are always bawling from the open windows of the upper storeys of the Dreg Street houses to their children in the street, or to their acquaintances in the windows across the road, or to those above or underneath in the same house.

But it is when the wages are received on Saturday evening that the orgies of Dreg Street are at their worst. Then children may be seen snatching the shawls and cloaks from their mothers' shoulders to save them from the pawn, or to pawn them on their own account. A large portion of the wages is spent on porter, a brutalising stimulant, and is the sacrifice of the poor to the Gods of Porter who live in Dublin. The porter allowance being provided for, the smallest possible amount is allocated for food; and, in the many cases where all sense of decency has not yet been lost, and where the sepulchre is still whitened on the Sabbath day, a sufficient sum will be set aside to redeem the Sunday clothes which were pawned on the previous

Monday, and are destined to return to the pawnbroker's custody on the next ensuing Monday morning.

When these arrangements have been made, not without curses and blows, the heads of families proceed down the street in groups, and gossip, spit, smoke, curse and jest on the side-walks, with their ragged, bawling acquaintances, turning in at intervals to drink in the public-houses until closing time at eleven. Then women, with dishevelled hair and open bosoms, may be seen rushing in semi-drunkenness and wild excitement, to buy scraps of pickled pork, or tainted, stale meat, at the worst butchers'; deferring until Sunday morning the purchase of their potatoes and cabbage, their loaves of bread and their halfpennyworths of milk.

Meanwhile, at home, neglected babies cry themselves into unconsciousness in locked rooms and rummage amongst burning embers, while the elder children loaf half-naked about the halls and passages, waiting for their parents, who are basking in the light and warmth of Alderman O'Clearly's public-house. Of all the accidental causes of infant mortality in Dublin, death by burning accounts for the largest number of victims, and is a constant subject of complaint from the coroners.

But even these horrors do not exhaust the catalogue of abominations for which Dreg Street is notorious: "Another matter to which attention has more than once been called in Dublin is the disposition of still-born children. In many instances these remains are put into ashpits, to the danger of the community. This occurs principally in the poorer districts, and is much more common than is generally known. If a child be born alive, and if it die under suspicious circumstances, an inquest is held to discover the cause of death. But there are no inquests, of course, on still-born children, and we believe that in the cemeteries no provision is made for their interment. We think that this is a question of sufficient importance, concerning, as it does, the public health, to demand the immediate consideration of the graveyard boards. In the interest of the general body of the people—especially the poorer

classes—some cheap and regular arrangement should be made for the burial of still-born children, and due notification should be given to the public by the authorities, both sanitary and cemetery. Dr. Kenny (the city Coroner) deserves great credit for bringing those matters to the light of day."[3]

Alderman O'Clearly, perhaps Lord Mayor, and probably ex-Lord Mayor, who has held every municipal honour and feels aggrieved because the law debars him from holding the post of High Sheriff,[4] provides the Saturday night entertainment for those wretched folk. Alderman O'Clearly, whose benign wife is probably at the head of all the confraternities and sodalities, and Sacred Thirst Leagues and Circles of the Living Rosary in the parish. Alderman and Mrs. O'Clearly, whose names are engraved in brass on several pews and altars in the parish church, with the request that the public would pray for them and theirs in this world and the next, in return for the public's having got from Alderman O'Clearly a seat to sit upon, or an altar on which to offer up sacrifice.

On Sunday mornings, filthy women may be seen hurrying to and from the open shops of the greengrocers and dairymen, many of them suffering from nausea, buying what they ought to have bought on Saturday nights. Filthy, but how well-formed; nay, in many cases, how handsome! What might they not have been? You will see the men at the same moment, unwashed, unshaven, and unbreakfasted, sneaking up the laneways to the poor beershops. Last night they passed by these beershops in scorn, when on their way to get drunk at the lordly public-houses, where the white-shirted assistants and the sublime proprietor—often, as I have said, an Alderman or Town Councillor, in diamond sleeve-links and heavy gold chain, purchased from the City Marshal[5] at a sale of unredeemed pledges—honoured the poor wretches with a condescending smile on their entrance, and callously gave the order for their expulsion when their funds were gone.

The particular tenement house, into which we have taken a glimpse, had once been the residence of a Lord Chief-Justice, and was now occupied by ten families. Besides the ragman's family in the study and the coal-porter's in the dining-room, there lived in the front drawing-room, a magnificent apartment, a poor widow and her daughter, dressmakers, whose means of livelihood were of the most meagre description. They belonged, perhaps, to the most hardworking and underpaid class of people on earth, and were mere skin and bone from want of food. But they kept their persons clean and their characters untainted amidst their hellish surroundings, and even found some recreation in attending to the pots and boxes of geraniums in the windows. Separated from them by only the folding door, a widowed charwoman and her family had occupied the back drawing-room, now for upwards of a month; overworked people, hunted by the sheriff and his bailiff from tenement to tenement, until at last they had run to earth in Dreg Street.

Upstairs on the second storey, in what used to be the principal bedroom and dressing-room of the mansion, lived a young artisan with his girl-wife and three children. The unsettled condition of the times had thrown hundreds of Dublin mechanics out of employment, including this young man. A tailor and his family occupied the back bedroom on the same floor. On the topmost storey a family of beggars occupied the spacious front bedrooms; and the back room on the same floor was inhabited by an unmarried girl, whose name, business, and previous history were unknown to everyone in the tenement except herself.

In the front basement, where once the spacious kitchens of the mansion shone with tin, copper, and electro-plate, whence the savoury aroma of dinner used to arise and pervade the street-side; there now lived a sickly widow and her three daughters. She was once the wife of a doctor, and had been the doweried daughter of a Dublin merchant; but she was now stricken with chronic rheumatism, and sub-

sisted from hand to mouth on the earnings of her daughters, who took in sewing for the large drapery houses, receiving a grudging alms from time to time from a solicitor who had seized on her house property to satisfy his untaxed costs. Some of the poorest denizens of Dreg Street are respectably-bred people who have allowed themselves to sink to the lowest depths of degradation. In the back basement lived a Polish Jew, just arrived in Dublin and started in the peddling trade, who had so far succeeded in keeping his race and business secret from his neighbours. The squalor of this basement abode, which, being underground, was ill-ventilated and positively stifling in hot weather, surpasses credence.

The poorest Gallowglass people who lived in the invigorating, fragrant, open country, where fresh air and sunshine are free to all, could hardly realise the loathsomeness of this underground den in Dublin. In addition to the want of light and air, there was the stifling smoke from the flues whenever the fires were kindled, for the chimneys had not been cleaned for years. In the wet days of winter the damp weltered and clung about the walls and stone floors, and the cold of the sunless place in times of frost, rain, and dear coals, was worse than Arctic.

The miscellaneous collection of human beings in this tenement house, twenty years ago, is typical of Dublin tenements in general even at the present day. The tenement-dwellers have lost all individuality and free will, all perception of modesty, propriety, and cleanliness. Not one of those in Dreg Street, except the Jew, was ever likely to rise to a better position in life. The one advantage of civilisation they possessed was religion. They were all Roman Catholics, and many of them might be seen scrambling, crawling, and sneaking into the chapel for late mass on Sundays, where they herded together in the free part of the chapel dazedly listening to the Latin murmurs of the distant priest, whose face they never saw in their wretched dens, except when he rushed in to give Extreme Unction in response to a sick-call.

Having remained soaking in the chapel for twenty minutes, they returned to their real home, which was the street-side. If they ever heard a sermon, it was a mystifying discourse about the dogmas and incomprehensible mysteries of the One True Faith and the One True Church, in the course of which they were sure to hear themselves congratulated upon the priceless blessing possessed by them and all others who were within the fold of their Holy Mother the Church. And they were almost certain to hear their industrious Protestant fellow-citizens, whose clean, happy faces and thrifty habits make the streets of Dublin bright, denounced openly, or by innuendo, as heretics, and lamented over as benighted outcasts, who, having lost the priceless treasure of the "Faith," were irrevocably shut out from the joys of that eternal Heaven, the portals of which stood ever wide open to welcome the denizens of Dreg Street. Protestant clergymen were always insulted and frequently assaulted when passing through this degraded street.[6]

It was a hot September evening, and in the "two-pair front" room the young artisan lay stretched on his back on an old bedstead, his hat covering his face, his hands clasped tightly under his poll.

His young wife, pallid, emaciated and anxious, her baby drinking impatiently at her breast, was seated on a stool before a grate in which glowed a few red coke cinders, watching an earthenware teapot on the hob in which she had wetted some tea. Rising painfully, and carrying the infant under her arm, she walked across the room and placed the teapot close beside half-a-loaf of bread and a small chunk of margarine, upon the lid of an empty trunk which had once held her clothes, but which now did service as a table.

"There's your supper, Dave!" she said, heaving a sigh.

At hearing which, and without uttering a word, her husband jumped out of bed, ate up the bread and margarine, and gulped down two cups of tea, without bestowing a glance either on his nursing wife or his

three toddling children who were rolling on the bare floor before his eyes.

She was eagerly soothing the baby to rest in a soap-box which had been converted into a cradle, her body being bent forward over the restless and unsatisfied infant, when her husband, having finished his supper, sprang to his feet and ran out of the room, as if anxious to avoid a parting scene with his wife.

The life-story of this young mechanic, so far from being unique, was and is an oft-told tale in the capital city of Ireland. Deserted by an unknown mother when three days old, he had been found by the police and taken to one of the city poorhouses. There was a scene of tremendous excitement at the Board's meeting next ensuing after his discovery. A leading Dublin merchant proposed that the foundling should be baptized and reared as a Protestant because he had been found lying at the door of a Protestant church. Alderman O'Clearly had denounced the proposal in unmeasured terms as proselytism of the deepest dye, and secured an adjournment of the question. The priests were consulted; and five-lined whips were issued to all the Home Rule and Catholic guardians commanding them to attend and vote on a question of Faith at the next meeting of the Board; whereat, after a prolonged debate, it was resolved by a large majority that the tiny waif should be baptized a Catholic, and be thenceforth known as David O'Rylan. From the poorhouse the little boy found his way into a priest-managed reformatory, where he had learned a trade; and, at twenty-one, he had enticed a respectably-reared young housemaid, to her lasting sorrow, to become his wife.

[1] *Freeman's Journal*, October 5, 1895.
[2] *Irish Times*, November 15, 1895.
[3] *Irish Daily Independent*, June 11, 1896.
[4] A Sheriff cannot hold a licence for the sale of intoxicating liquors.
[5] The City Marshal of Dublin supervises the pawnbrokers.
[6] See "Priests and People in Ireland."

CHAPTER VII

"Each looks as if revenge for all were staked on him alone."
—THOMAS DAVIS.

ONCE outside the door, the young artisan was lost to his wife as effectually as if he had gone to a different hemisphere; a man of his class being trackless and indistinguishable in Dublin on a Saturday evening. A year ago, on such an evening as this, she had endeavoured to find him, trudging from Phibsborough to Portobello, and from the North Wall to the Phœnix Park, without effect, and had suffered so many insults in the streets that she never renewed the experiment.

She had not yet become deadened to all sense of grief and loneliness, much as she had suffered; and when she heard the door slammed she rushed out on the landing and loudly called him back. But he was gone, and she found the tailor's wife, who lived on the same storey, staring at her, waiting, she said, to borrow some coal. She returned heartbroken to ponder upon her misfortunes. The companionship of her children only aggravated her misery; for she felt that they were growing up to endure a life of want, suffering, perhaps iniquity, and she was powerless to alleviate their lot.

Her husband, meantime, walked swiftly through the streets, looking no man or woman in the face, studiously avoiding the glances of the police and of those men in civilian clothes whom he took, rightly or wrongly, to be detectives; and raising his hat reverentially as he passed the many chapels, monasteries, and convents which lay along his route. So intense was his zeal for the worship of ecclesiastical buildings that he uncovered as he passed the Four Courts and Ganley's Wool Store,

mistaking those classic porticoes in his confusion for holy places.

Eyes downcast, he walked quickly to the westward, and found himself in a district full of narrow streets, low lodging-houses, marine stores, tenements, and public-houses. Into a public-house in one of these streets went the young mechanic, bestowing a look of intelligence and a wink upon a man who stood at the door. Passing through the shop, the floor of which was strewn with sawdust, he worked his way through the men and women who were smoking, drinking, and expectorating in the partitioned spaces along the counter, and directed his course towards a glass door at the end of the shop, in front of which a man was standing. O'Rylan shook hands with this man and entered. He then went up a dark narrow stair and emerged on the roof of the house, where he found another man standing. He shook hands with this man also, and received from him a small black mask. He then tapped in a peculiar way at the skylight of the next house. There was no answer, but he waited and tapped again three times quickly and twice slowly.

A voice from within said, "You are there!" and he replied, "I came as you bade me."

Then the same voice inside said, "Can you wait a minute?" and he repeated his first observation, "I came as you bade me."

"Enter," said the voice inside the door.

He opened the shutter and stepped in. There were seven men seated at an oblong table, one occupying the position of chairman at its head, the others sitting on his right and left, all wearing short masks covering eyes and nose.

O'Rylan could not identify any of his associates in the room, but the chairman knew all the others, and the two men who sat next to the chairman also knew everyone present. This Society was only one of the many secret associations which flourished about the time of the Phœnix Park assassinations, and O'Rylan had been led into it by some companions he had met

at a Labourers' Benevolent Club. Undiscovered murders were then prevalent to an extent even as yet imperfectly realised by the public, and the members of this and similar societies were held together partly by a bond of common terror, partly by an irrational idea that by murdering those in high places the existing distress might be alleviated, partly by a feeling of crude patriotism, and largely by the hope of considerable personal gain and a well-founded confidence in immunity from punishment.

Nor was this confidence without justification, for there were no competent detective police then in the country. The Royal Irish Constabulary was more a military force than a police organisation; and the detective division of the Dublin Metropolitan Police had not been fostered by the authorities. The dissatisfaction felt by the Government at the inability of the police to cope with the deluge of crime which overspread the country found constant expression, but official reprimands only provoked discontent and rebellion amongst the constables. The Royal Irish Constabulary went out on strike. So also did the Dublin Metropolitan Police, and for several days order was maintained in the city by soldiers and marines, and Dubliners beheld the unwonted spectacle of a strong force of military pitching their tents in College Green night after night.

Some of those secret societies, while professing to be founded on lines of the broadest patriotism, were in reality formed for some specific purpose, such as the execution of a scheme of personal revenge. Others were organised with the object of discovering amongst the members some unhappy individual or individuals likely to become suitable implements for the commission of crime under the guidance of the designing founders of the Society, who would themselves remain in the background.

The Society, at a council meeting of which we are now assisting, was managed by men, at once selfish, unscrupulous and patriotic. It was styled the Society

of Irish Valiants, and its constitution was as wide in its scope as the commission of a knight-errant. Its members were bound to administer political relief by unconstitutional and, if necessary, by criminal means, to all true Irishmen and Irishwomen in distress caused by the oppression of Sassenach landlords and English officials. The Society originated in the fertile brain of a young Irish-American, commonly spoken of by his colleagues as "The Boss," who had returned to Ireland after a career of failure in the United States.

At that time there existed a widespread belief that Home Rule was certain to be granted; and the consequence was that several shrewd, industrious men, and frequently men of religious habits, who possessed no moral sense,[1] did not scruple to join those secret societies in the hope that, when Home Rule became an accomplished fact, they might be behind the scenes and have a strong claim on the first native administration for personal advancement.

The founder of the Valiants had won the confidence of a number of representative men on the Nationalist side in Dublin politics, including Mr. Nicholas Quisk, T.C., P.L.G., eldest son of old Thomas Quisk, and nephew of Mrs. Ellen Pinkerry of Ballyglanders. Nicholas Quisk was a robust young man, possessed of an iron constitution and great physical strength, who had come to Dublin ten years before this date, at the age of sixteen, as an apprentice to Alderman O'Clearly, publican. Quisk had no money; but, when he had served his time, Alderman O'Clearly set him up in an important public-house, the market price of which was £5,000. Alderman O'Clearly, who was the real purchaser of the house, had borrowed that sum of money from his banker on the security of the title-deeds of the premises and his own personal guarantee. The Alderman did not appear openly in the transaction; because, being already the holder of more than one licence for the sale of drink, he could not apply for the licence of this additional house with any prospect of success.

Nicholas Quisk, accordingly, applied to the Recorder

of Dublin for the licence of the premises. The Recorder, struck by the youthful appearance of the applicant, asked the young man, in amazement, where he had obtained the £5,000 to purchase so important a concern, and young Quisk swore, without an instant's hesitation, that he had £1,000 of his own and had borrowed the remainder on the security of the licence. To give colour to Quisk's evidence Alderman O'Clearly had lodged £1,000 temporarily to the credit of Quisk's current account, and Quisk's cheque for £5,000 to the vendor of the house was produced in court marked "paid" by the Bank.

The Recorder, having granted the licence, Nicholas Quisk found himself, at twenty-three years of age, the overt proprietor of a palatial corner public-house in a busy neighbourhood. He was bound to pay the sum of £350 per annum, being interest at the rate of seven per cent. on £5,000, to Alderman O'Clearly in monthly instalments, out of which the Alderman, having borrowed the money at five per cent., paid the Bank £250, and put the balance into his own plethoric treasury. But the Alderman gained more by the transaction, for he also executed a lease of the premises to young Nicholas Quisk at a rack rent of £50 a year over the rent in the original lease.

But, despite all the burden of debt imposed on him, Nicholas Quisk, at the end of two years, succeeded so completely to the satisfaction of the Bank and Alderman O'Clearly, that the Bank released the Alderman from his personal guarantee and accepted an equitable mortgage on the house as sufficient security for the loan, the principal of which had already been reduced by the sum of a thousand pounds. During those two years Nicholas Quisk lived on the poorest fare, and totally abstained from the use of alcoholic liquor. He spent six long days of the week, from 7 A.M. to 11 P.M., and Sundays from 2 P.M. to 7 P.M., in the reeking atmosphere of his shop, making himself popular with all classes of tipplers, but especially with the members of the numerous political societies, with which Dublin is crowded.

At the beginning of the third year, finding himself comparatively free, the young man, acting on the advice of a political mentor, stood for a ward and was triumphantly returned to the Corporation. Six months afterwards he became a member of the Board of Guardians; and, within a year, had become a prominent public figure at all municipal and political gatherings in the city. In the first flush of enthusiasm, consequent on his partial emancipation from debt, Nicholas Quisk had been captured in the net of the plausible Irish-American who had founded the Society of Irish Valiants, and was convinced by him that Home Rule was coming "right away at the next change of Government." He was led to believe that a great future was open to those who could get themselves "behind the scenes," and, having first won the confidence of the political leaders, should afterwards succeed in dictating terms to them, and, to use the Yankee's expression, eventually "run the whole durned show."

"No individual can do anything, I guess, except as a member of an organisation. Wall, the prominent positions in all the public organisations are already taken up," argued the political Boss, "therefore we must have a secret organisation of our own which will force the hands of the public organisation and give us a power behind the scenes. In fact, sir, we mean to be the stage managers, whoever it may be that struts upon the political stage. Guess that's sound politics, common sense and patriotism combined!"

"The public min 'ud want, aw—a little support, that is to say, they can't be expected to do everything," chimed in Mr. Quisk; and it was largely due to the Boss's wire-pulling that Mr. Nicholas Quisk was elected a Nationalist member of the Corporation and of the Board of Guardians.

Nicholas Quisk never knew clearly how the Society of Valiants was managed; nor did he know all its members, though he subscribed to its funds, and was a member of its council. He was a believer in the policy of Physical Force as opposed to Constitutional Agita-

tion, but, in his innermost heart, he never anticipated being called upon to employ physical force against the forces of the Crown.

During the proceedings antecedent to Mrs. Pinkerry's eviction, he had expressed his willingness to pledge his credit to the extent of several hundred pounds, in order to enable his father to offer a larger fine than his rival Scarlant for the possession of Ballyglanders. On the occasion of each of the seizures of his aunt's cattle, and while her eviction was impending, he had mentioned the case to his friend the Boss, and it had been discussed at the council of the Society of Irish Valiants. The Boss had taken advantage of the widow's case to pay a visit to Gallowglass and to found a sub-branch of the Valiants' Society in the district, with Dick Quisk and Moss Scarlant as its leading members.

When the news arrived in Dublin that Mrs. Pinkerry had been actually evicted and that Thomas O'Brile had been put into possession of her farm, Nicholas Quisk felt unspeakably indignant, and his injured pride was skilfully worked upon by the Boss, until the young publican's rage and resentment glowed into a white heat.

In the Boss's private opinion, the time had just then arrived for testing the courage of some of his most promising dupes by commanding the performance of a definite act of violence. The newspapers were full of the cruelties inflicted by the Earl of Gallowglass and Mr. Culvert on the widow Pinkerry, and the most extreme organs of Nationalist opinion denounced Thomas O'Brile "the grabber" in unmeasured terms, as a traitor whose conduct was more criminal than that of the landlord and agent.

The Boss, who had ulterior objects in view which were altogether unknown to Nicholas Quisk, took advantage of the popular outcry, and had a formal vote of condemnation passed upon Mr. Culvert by the Dublin branch of the Valiants' Society, of which he was president. And he pretended to forward this vote to some head centre, the place of meeting of which was, he alleged, unknown to anyone but the presidents of various

head branches, of whom he was the only one in Ireland.

Each member of the Society had bound himself by oath to commit murder if ordered to do so by sealed order; but Nicholas Quisk, the president, and two others had bound themselves to each other by a mutual pledge that no such order would ever be issued to them under any circumstances.

These proceedings imposed no strain on the young publican's conscience, except in so far as they endangered his personal safety. Nicholas Quisk felt for his struggling relatives in Gallowglass. He had not forgotten the terrors inspired twice a year by the appearance of the rent-warner on his father's farm, and, could he have done so without danger of detection, he would assuredly have shot the agent who had evicted his aunt and bestowed her farm on a stranger. He did not pause to reflect on the relations that existed between Alderman O'Clearly and himself as landlord and tenant. He knew that, if he himself became a defaulter in any of his payments to that dignitary, he would be ejected and sold up in the Court of Bankruptcy without the slightest compunction. But it never occurred to him that the Earl of Gallowglass had acted with a degree of leniency to Mrs. Pinkerry which Alderman O'Clearly would never display to Nicholas Quisk under similar circumstances.

The account of the proceedings which reached him from home was naturally biassed, full of exaggerations and inaccuracies, and couched in language well calculated to inflame the passion of an impressionable Irishman, in whom the moral sense had never received any education.

"You are behind your time," said the chairman, speaking in measured tones and in an assumed accent, and fixing his eyes on the newcomer, who dropped his head but did not excuse himself. "Wall, fur seven laung centuries," continued the chairman, "our country has been crushed under the heel of hur vile enemy, and who is to blame fur it but laggards? Laggards who

wur nuver on time, who slept when they might have saved hur by keepin' awake; laggards who would not cut short thur mornin's sleep by one half-hour to free thur country."

The tone in which these words were uttered, indicative as it was of suppressed passion, seemed to terrify everyone present.

There was silence in the room, and it was obvious that all the others were afraid of the black-bearded man in the chair.

"Erin, my beloved country," said the chairman, "the Saxon villains will not pollute thy soil much longer! The greater Urland beyond the broad Atlantic will soon arise in all her might and demand thy freedom in the name of humanity. Then the millions of oppressed and wronged Urishmen and Urishwomen, who are the rightful owners of this fruitful nation, will soon arise in thur might and claim thur inhuritance. The time is coming when the poor shall be rich, when the wives and children of the poor shall be wall an' happy!"

The young mechanic, whose conscience was not quite dead in his sober moments, thought of his wife and children whom he had left at home. A gleam of intelligence and sympathy lit up his face, and, like one under a spell, he stared at the chairman, who went on: "The time is near at hand when the placehunters, the bloodsuckers, the vermin who prey upon the sons of toil will be trampled in the dust! The hour of thur doom is fixed. It is true we cannot lead an army into the field; but we can make a reign of turror which will change the serfs of to-day into soldiers of Fontenoy, and make even the women of Ireland do deeds more mem'rable than the defence of Limerick under Sarsfield."

"But what'll be the end of it, president?" asked one of the men at the left-hand side.

"The end?" exclaimed the chairman. "Liburty, fortune, happiness, content, the exturmination of the foreign drones and bloodsucking vampires who live on your Urish workers; the end of the absentee landlords, Castle hacks and officials, who gamble at Homburg and

Monte Carlo, upon sal'ries paid out of Irish taxes for doing nothing. Bleeding and bleeding alone will cure the nation. In fact Ireland must be bled until the poison of the Sassenachs [2] and the Swaddlers [3] is ejected from her system."

"But when they are transferred others will take their places?" urged a dissentient.

"The others will go the same road then," said the chairman sternly.

O'Rylan timorously ventured to say:

"An' will Ireland then be free?
Says the shan van vucht."

The president's reply came aptly:

"Yes, Ireland shall be free
From the centre to the sea
And Hurrah for Libertee!
Says the shan van vucht."

The spirits of all were aroused, and with one voice, though in hushed tones, they said:

"Then Hurrah for Libertee,
Says the shan van vucht." [4]

The chairman smiled almost imperceptibly as he said: "The disarmed white slaves of Ireland know nothing of the rifle, but it needs no drill-book to work the silent steel. Our legion is organised. I have the sealed orders here."

The others looked up in surprise.

"Have you them?" said a young man at the chairman's right, his pale lips wide apart and his anæmic gums plainly visible.

"Yes, I have them!" repeated the chairman deliberately:

"I bear orders from the Captain, get you ready quick and soon;
For the pikes must be together at the risin' of the moon."

Moistening his lips with his tongue and betraying signs of nervousness, he produced a sealed envelope

across the face of which was drawn a heavy cross in red ink.

"The blood of many villains will flow soon," said the chairman, "but it will only be a foretaste to make the country ripe for the harvest when our legion will lay its scythe to the crop of foreign weeds and parasites who stifle out true-born Urishmen in thur native land. Fame and fortune will be the reward of the heroes who use the steel for Ireland now in this holiest of holy causes. This will be, as I might say, the first pitched battle fought by the Valiants, and wall will it be for him who does his allotted work. . . . But woe to the vile coward and reptile who blunders!"

"Give us the orders, president," said the centre man at the left-hand side.

"I won't delay," said the black-bearded man, putting his hand apparently into his breast pocket, from which he produced a long gleaming dirk, with which he noiselessly cut open the sealed envelope. Laying the dagger on the table with the ebony haft pointing towards himself, he read as follows: "*It is decreed that the citizens of the eighth section do cast lots, this day, and that the citizen upon whom the lot falls do proceed at once to the place named in the sealed packet herein, and do on the appointed day perform the deed set down in the sealed packet before mentioned.*"

When he ceased reading he handed the paper to the man on his right, who examined its writing, signature, and seal. It was passed on to the others in succession, who did likewise, and then it was handed back to the president. Apparently satisfied with the genuineness of the document, the men shuffled restlessly.

"Give us the lots!" cried several, eager to know if the worst fate awaited them.

The president produced a square oak box containing eight balls, seven of which were black and the remaining one white. He laid it on the table near his dagger, and produced a long black silk bag of great depth but with a narrow mouth. He passed it round the table, and it was felt by all and found to be empty. Then the bag

was handed back to him, and, in the presence of all, he dropped the eight balls into it.

Presenting it to each man in turn, he said, "Draw!"

The first man drew out a black ball; so did the second man; and each stifled a sigh of relief as he did so.

"Draw," said the president, when it came to the turn of the man from Dreg Street. The young man hastily pushed in his hand and fiddled nervously with the balls. Once he drew his hand up, and, changing his mind, let the ball fall back with a click.

"Hold!" said the chairman, his brow growing black and his mien threatening. Now that he was upon his feet it could be seen that he was, indeed, a very large man, well built and muscular. He walked back to his chair and sat down, laying the bag on the table beside the dagger.

"Citizens," he said, "have we a coward in our midst? Why should a man hesitate as to which ball he draws up? Whatever is his fate, it ought to be a soldier's greatest pride to do his duty. The man that is anxious to avoid drawing the white ball is anxious to shirk his duty to Ireland, and is a coward! And the punishment of cowardice is instant death."

Suddenly three of the men drew daggers similar to the president's, and when the young mechanic gazed up, it was only to be cowed by flashing steel and the threatening postures of his companions.

"Did I mistake you?" asked the chairman.

"Ay did you, sir," replied the young man, trembling with excitement. "I'm no coward, see if I am! Try me. I'll do me jooty, aye, if I had to go to hell's gates! Give me the bag!"

The young man had felt a slight unevenness on the sides of the ball he was drawing up, and, terrified thereat, had let it drop.

He now thrust in his hand, and, seizing the first ball that came to him, pulled it up unhesitatingly.

It was the white ball.

Not a word was uttered, as the chairman returned to his chair, and laid the bag on the table before him.

The young man's feelings cannot be described. His wife and children seemed to rise up like ghosts before him.

"Favoured citizen, here is the order!" said the president at length.

The young man opened the envelope which had been put into his hands, and read its contents. Then he passed it to the president, who, having read it, said: "The enemy in Gallowglass is asleep, the glory will be easily won. When can you start?"

"To-night, any time at all!" said the young man huskily.

"The order says *at once*," said the chairman, "but I give you leave to stay till the morning if you want to see— But you won't waver:

> " May every light from Cross of Christ, that saves the heart of man,
> Be hid in clouds of blood before it reach the Saxon clan;
> For sure, O God!—and You know all, whose thought for all sufficed—
> To expiate these Saxon sins they'd want another Christ." [5]

The young man put his hands across his eyes and drew a long breath.

"Here are the means," said the president, handing him five pounds. "If you require more, or if there is any trouble, you know what to do."

The young man took the money, and, after some formalities, the assembly broke up; each member leaving the public-house alone, having first lingered awhile at the counter to take a drink and to disarm suspicion. The president remained in consultation with O'Rylan, and the young artisan was the last to leave. When he emerged into the open air he walked quickly in the direction of Dreg Street. With parched lips and a palpitating heart he pushed his way through the brilliant mob of soldiers at the west side of Sackville Street. The red uniforms of the infantry, the clinking spurs of the cavalry, goaded him to a frenzy. The cries of the girls entangled among the soldiers, spurs rending skirts and padded scarlet melting hearts, their curses and

their laughter drove him wild. The air reeked with the odour of tobacco and porter and cheap perfumes. He clutched his dagger and contemplated running amuck through the crowd; hacking, goring, disembowelling the paid minions of England who thus flaunted their hated liveries before the eye of beaten Ireland, and stamped upon her very heart. Those hated Saxon mercenaries, those butchers of black men, how many of them could he hurl into hell before his hand was stayed? But the gibbet arose before his view, the doom of Allen, Larkin and O'Brien[6] drenched his fury, and he turned up Abbey Street a saner man, and hastened on his way to Dreg Street, the centre of Tenement Town.

When he reached the tenement house in Dreg Street, he found the entrance blocked by a number of children who had tied a rope from one railing to the other across the hall door. A girl seated on this rope was swinging to and fro, being pushed from behind by another girl who was standing in the hall, while the rest looked on and chattered, waiting to take their turn on the swing. The painter would have liked to see his wife and children before starting on his perilous journey, but he felt that he had not the strength of mind, nor the ability in dissimulation necessary to carry him through the ordeal of such an interview.

Therefore he went into the "caboose" of a public-house at the corner of Dreg Street, and, borrowing a pencil from the youngest curate,[7] wrote a few lines on a scrap of paper to say that he had got work down the country and would be back in a few weeks. Then he pinned a pound bank-note to the paper, and folding both together, put them into an envelope, which he addressed to his wife.

He ordered a pint of porter, drank it, and then, returning to the door of the tenement house, he gave the envelope to the biggest of the girls grouped around the swing, and, paying her a penny for her trouble, told her to deliver it to his wife at once.

The girl, a precocious lass of thirteen, barefoot and

only half-clad, but with a wealth of yellow hair, went straight into the study to show the letter to her mother, the rags-and-bones woman, who looked at it for a moment, and, overcome by her curiosity, tore the envelope open. It was an unparalleled occurrence in her experience to find a Dreg Street husband sending a message by letter from the hall door to his wife on the third floor. At the sight of the banknote her curiosity gave place to avarice, and crumpling it up she thrust it into her bosom. Then, reading the words written on the scrap of paper, and finding that they contained no allusion to the money, she determined to brazen it out. She went upstairs immediately, and with a cheek of leather, incapable of a blush, she handed the torn envelope to the young woman, offering no explanation or apology.

"Yer man gemme this to give ye," she said. "Could ye lind me the loan of a griddle, ma'am, me own is broke this year back!"

The dazed young wife took the envelope in amazement, and, so spiritless had she grown from constant misfortune, that, though she noticed the envelope torn open, she lacked courage to demand an explanation of the fact. Having replied that she had no griddle, she stood facing Mrs. Rags, holding the envelope in her hand without looking at its contents. Mrs. Rags, desirous of seeing what effect the perusal of the note would produce on its recipient, placed her arms akimbo and stood staring at the young woman.

"Why doesn't ye open it?" she asked.

As if aroused from a reverie, the young woman started involuntarily, and, in terror of the virago before her, she unfolded the little scrap of paper and read its contents. For a moment her head reeled, and crying out, "Dave, Dave, have you deserted me?" she fell to the floor and fainted, amidst the screams of her children.

Mrs. Rags looked scornfully at the pale young creature, and going across to the corner where stood a tin of water, she emptied its contents on the death-

like face, which presently showed signs of resuscitation, and the young woman sat up. Seeing her eyes open, Mrs. Rags left the room and stood for a moment on the landing outside, listening to the tailor's wife scolding her husband in the back bedroom.

Then the beldame, sticking her head in again at the young wife's door, said: "You'll hev to take the street, as many better than y' did before." And she went downstairs, leaving the helpless creature whom she had robbed prostrate in the dark.

Disconsolate and broken-hearted as the young mother was that summer's night, listening to the hideous revelry in the street, which did not cease till dawn, the wretchedness of her lot was by no means exceptional in Dreg Street.

[1] James Carey, for instance, the noted Invincible who planned the Phœnix Park murders, was famed for his observance of his religious duties.

[2] Saxons or Protestants.

[3] Protestants, a nickname.

[4] Lines from a well-known popular song. Shan van vucht means "Little old man."

[5] Lines by John Savage, a patriotic writer, born in Dublin, 1828.

[6] Three Irishmen, executed for the rescue of Fenian prisoners in Manchester, commonly called "The Manchester Martyrs."

[7] Assistants in public-houses are almost invariably called "curates" in Dublin.

CHAPTER VIII

"And when tyrant death's
Arrow shall transfix ye,
Let your latest breaths
Be whisky, whisky, whisky!
Whisky, drink divine,
Why should drivellers bore us
With the praise of wine,
When we've thee before us?"

—JOSEPH O'LEARY.

ALONE in the street, O'Rylan walked a couple of miles across the crowded city and then entered the flourishing public-house known as "Quisk's," far away from the tavern through which he had entered the Valiants' meeting-place. Quisk's was crowded with parties of workmen engaged in treating each other to porter. Lest it should excite comment if he sat down to drink without a companion, he invited two young men who were lounging at the door to have a treat. Being public-house touts, who nominally lived by holding hackney horses at the door while jarvies were drinking with their fares inside, they gladly accepted O'Rylan's invitation, and sat down on a bench facing the counter.

"Three pints!" said the mechanic.

O'Rylan did not know that Quisk was a member of the Valiants' Society. He only knew the publican as a drink purveyor who kept excellent porter and whisky, and who was especially popular with the Labour Associations. "Quisk's Drinks," so ran the advertisements, "are Guinness, Bass and Jameson! Quisk's creamy pints of Guinness from the Wood a Speciality!"

"Grand drink!" said the mechanic, when the "creamy pints" were put before them.

"'Tis is good is grub any day!" said one of the touts.

"Aye, is it," assented the other.

"Begob, we ates nothing oany what we drinks!" said the first tout, smacking his lips and gently blowing aside the froth.

"Be godden, I could do with a piece o' supper, boys," said O'Rylan. "But where's the use o' complainin'?"

"Ah, wan o' thim huxters up the road'll give y' is much bread and butter as'll do!" said the tout. Then he added: "Here's fortune, mister!" raising his glass and clinking it against O'Rylan's and against his fellow-tout's, before tasting its contents.

"Chin-chin!" said O'Rylan.

The owner of the public-house stood inside the counter in his white shirt sleeves, the cuffs of which were doubled back, laying bare his hirsute wrists. He was a clean-shaven man, under thirty years of age, with a defiant expression of countenance and very close-cropped fair hair. A glass-cloth lay upon his shoulder.

"Aw, look at here," he was saying to a select knot of rather well-dressed men, as he leaned on the tea canister that was kept on the counter for show, but was never used, "Aw, I tell ye what it is, look at here, it's a—it's a—it's a—ay I might say a hunderd to wan chance if this Parliament'll do anything t'imeelerulate the condition of Ireland, aw, that is, of course, barring a——"

At this stage a beggar-woman, almost naked, and with three young children clinging about her, appeared at the threshold.

"Gerraway, gerraway, missus, don't be blocking up the primisses," cried the publican; "don't be interferin' with business."

"Wan copper, yer honner, to buy a bit o' bread for the chil——"

"Gerrawaw!" roared the publican, amidst the approving nods of his auditors, who were engaged in the serious business of sipping their whisky, or gulping down their porter—a business not to be interrupted by such frivolity as the plaint of a ragged woman and her urchins.

A young man, somewhat under thirty, with curly fair hair clustering over a flushed brow, came forward from

the recesses of the shop, and said: "Would you like a bit o' meat, ma'am, a bit o' fresh meat?"

"Ay, would I, yer honner, sure y' have a kind face!" said the beggar-woman.

"Hold yer apron, ma'am, here y' are," cried the young man, hurling something wrapped in brown paper into the woman's apron.

The publican and the tipplers looked on with curiosity. The woman unfolded the paper, but when she saw its contents she screamed aloud and took several paces back to the door, her face wearing a horrified look. A thud was heard, and something blood-stained and heavy fell on the floor. It was a human hand and forearm.[1]

The young man shrieked with laughter. The publican cried: "Aw, Mr. Mulleady, yez medical students will be the death o' me!"

The tipplers laughed also, but not heartily, and those near it turned their backs on the hand. The young man addressed as Mulleady belonged to the species popularly known as "chronic medical students," and he laughed loudly as he picked up the hand, covered it with the paper, and placed it under the seat on which he had been sitting.

The woman grew vituperative.

"I'll give y' a tanner if you'll throw it into the river for me, ma'am," said Mulleady. "I got it at th' 'ospital an' I'm done with it!"

"Gerrout y' scamp, of a mane, low,—" began the woman. But the publican lightly vaulted over the counter and clutched her by the shoulder.

"Call a po-liss," cried the publican vehemently.

Almost instantly a portly policeman entered the house and chased the shivering creatures into the roadway.

"Evenin', constable," said the publican, his face beaming into a grin.

"Fine evening, Mr. Quisk," replied the immense policeman, backing off the licensed premises, like one of the brewer's great shire horses, feeling that he had done his duty.

"Fine body o' min, thim Metropolitans," said a drinker.

"Aye, an' their demands should be consaded too," said Mr. Quisk, in allusion to the then much-discussed police strike.

"See here, they're a credit, begob, to Ireland!" said another drinker. "I was over there in London, I was, an' I, an' I, yerrah, wan of our bobbies 'ud make three o' thim London peelers. I was never so proud!" On the strength of which he finished off a bottle of stout, twopence to the shrine of the millionaire.

"Very true for you, indeed!" said Mr. Quisk, with a gravity of countenance befitting so important a subject.

"I heard from a friend in the country to-day," went on the publican, "aw, from a friend in Gallowglass, aw that is, ay if I said it I wouldn't be far out aither, it's the premmeer town of what they call th' Unrivalled County, although it's me own native town, bred, born an' reared——"

At the mention of Gallowglass O'Rylan was startled and listened attentively to what the publican was saying.

"The onrivalled county!" exclaimed one of the drinkers.

"Ay, th' Unrivalled, so 'tis called ever an' always, oftener than be its own proper name, that is the county o' Gass, famous far an' wide for what they call the beauty of its women, ladies, young girls, you know, an' the stringth an' injurance of its men."

"I always thought me own county o' Sweet Kildare was first—" began a half-inebriated tippler.

"Or the Banner County, that's Clare, that me aunt's husband——"

"Or the Premier County, that's Tipperary——"

"Or the Royal County of Maythe——"

"Nonsense, men, Dublin holds the belt; Dublin carries off the palm," cried the medical student. "I appeal to Mr. Canty!"

"Hear, hear!" shouted the vast majority of the tipplers; and, in a brief silence which ensued, the young

man sang the following doggerel, which was chorussed by all in the shop:

"Tipp'rary breeds a hardy lot,
Tight-fisted with their money;
From Suir to Shannon shrewd and hot,
They smile as sweet as honey!
Grass heifers Meath, Roscommon ewes
Will give you all in plenty;
From Cork fine girls you may choose,
Fat, fair, and under twenty!
But the Dublin girl that's born an' bred,
Above all Ireland holds her head,
Stiff upper lip's her beauty.
No holy poke, she likes a joke,
She shies at nayther drink nor smoke,
An' at cards she knows her duty.
Each afternoon in Grafton Street,
She's gorgeous in her raiment;
Puts on her bit at Leopardstown,
And sweetly takes her payment!
Here's Granua Aile, boys! Drink her down!
Quick end to all her troublin'!
May beauty, wit, an' wisdom crown
Her Parliament in Dublin!

"If Down an' Derry men are shrewd,
'Tis Sweet Kildare for courting!
If Antrim beats the North for sense,
East Cork's the place for sporting!
A Connaught man is like a hare
So sly, so fond of dodging!
The Wexford man is slow and sure,
Each pound in bank he's lodging!
But the Dublin boy that's born an' bred,
Above 'em all high holds his head,
For swagger, sport, an' cunning!
He's neither North, South, East, nor West,
But a blend of all that each holds best,
An' the tips he gets are stunning.
To Fairyhouse each Eastertide
With Madge or Tess or Nancy,
Six on each outside car, he'll ride,
An' freely back his fancy!
Here's Granua Aile, boys! Drink her down!
Quick end to all her troublin'!
May beauty, wit, and wisdom crown
Her Parliament in Dublin!"[2]

"More power, Mr. Mulleady!" "Well over, Mr Mulleady!" "Long life, sir!" "Your health, Mr. Mulleady!" such were the cries as the chronic medical student resumed his seat and took a long draught of stout.

"Sht! Sh! Order!" cried the publican, laughing. "Ye see ye can't be all, what they call aw, first! Dear dirty Dublin must get the palm. They's, aw, what they call fine sarcasm in that song!"

Which sentiment meeting general support, Mr. Councillor Quisk, P.L.G., went on: "They's a bloody villain down in Gallowglass turnin' widuz an' orphins our their homes every day o' the year, aw, what they call evictin', in the country, you know! Aw, blee me, aw, it's a, it's a, ay if I said a hun—a thou—a million to wan chance, but he'll burn the roofs over people's heads or kill people in wreckin' an' pullin' down the cabins over 'em."

"What's his name? I think he was denounced in the *Hero's Journal* in a layther!" said a tippler.

"Were y' paid yer winnin's on the Leger?" said Mr. Quisk smilingly to a newcomer.

"I thought that layther too mild," said the tippler. "You're a better politician than meself, how is ever."

Mr. Quisk smiled at the flattering admission.

"His name is Culvert," he said in a loud voice; "what they call a land agent an' man o' general property, an' a black thief be all accounts." Then to the newcomer, "I hadn't a ha'penny on the Leger!"

Here a tall, fat man, rather under middle age, very clean shaven as to his lower cheeks and chin, but very hirsute as to his upper cheeks and upper lip, and very much oiled as to his hair, and very shiny as to his tall silk hat and satin bow tie, entered the shop carrying a bundle of sealskin jackets on his left arm. Diamonds glistened in his shirtfront and cuffs, and a massive gold chain extended across his vest from pocket to pocket.

"Evenin', Mr. Threeballs, evenin', sir!" exclaimed the publican deferentially. "We're talkin' o' the Leger."

"Evenin', ha, ha! Fine weather, thank God! Half o' J. J. an' S., Mr. Quisk, as usual. Will you join? Yes! Thanks, very nice o' you. Any news in the Corporation or at the Guarjians? Don't delay. Time flies, death approaches, ha, ha!" said Mr. Threeballs, who at once became the centre of attraction for the tipplers.

"I don't mind if I do take a wee taste," said Quisk. "Here, Larry, two halves special. That's a vallible lot you have, Mr. Threeballs!"

The pawnbroker looked contemplatively at the heap of furs on his arm: "Aw, it is that," he said, "a vallible lot, I s'pose if I said two hunderd an' fifty, I wouldn't be far out. I'm takin' 'em home for safe keepin'! I take a pleasure in lending. Inquire here before asking elsewhere. Please mention to friends. I must be off; good evenin', gentlemen!" And bending low, the pawnbroker tossed off the whisky and ran out of the shop.

"A great man o' business that!" said Councillor Quisk.

"A rare man!" echoed one of the drinkers. "He's doin' a grand trade. He never bets!"

"He's a rale prosperous, interprisin' man, a prince an' a gintleman every inch of him," said another, "doin' a fine trade! Of a Monday morn ye'd be hard set to get standin' room on the footway forenenst wan of his pawnshops!"

"Af I was put to me opingun," said Mr. Quisk, "I'd say himself an' Alderman Dinis Hearsely, th' undertaker, are the wealthiest min in the neighbourhood. I never yet wanted change of a fiver or a tenner, but Threeballs had it. 'Tis seldom I'm athout it meself, but for all."

"You're well in the runnin' with 'em yerself, Councillor, don't I know it?" exclaimed an elderly man with a flabby, wrinkled, dirt-soaked face, with uncombed beard and bloodshot eyes, with trembling hands, arrayed like a broken-down professional man, with a soiled linen collar and tie, wearing a heavy brass watch chain over a greasy waistcoat, a foxy tall hat, and a full-length, square-cut, double-breasted frock-coat, in the tail pockets of which he carried some cabinet-maker's tools.

Striking the counter with his fist, this promiscuously-attired personage exclaimed: "This damn govermint'll do nauthin' for ye, nauthin'! Land Bills, pshaw! Pish-shaw!"

"True, true, Mr. Canty, true for you," said Mr. Quisk gravely.

"Clear the Culverts our th' country, an' then I'll talk to ye!" went on Mr. Canty. "'Tis on account o' the likes o' Culvert the country is teemin' with soajers an' peelers, peelers and sodgers."

"Soljers an' peelers, an' every other loafer of um, as I may say, has the guts et our[3] the country!" cried Mr. Quisk.

"Gentlemen," said a sharp-visaged man of about forty years of age, who had been attentively listening to the conversation, in which he had not yet joined, "Gentlemen, I rise to order!" He spoke with the nasal twang peculiar to Americans, and at the sound of his voice all the others ceased speaking. He did not raise his voice to a high key, but, nevertheless, he compelled attention.

"Gentlemen," continued this individual, "let us have no secret societies! As the Archbishop says, anything onder Heaven or above Hell but secret societies!"

Mr. Quisk rolled his eyes upwards at these words and then coughed loudly and expectorated, as if recalling himself to the surrounding world.

O'Rylan was strangely agitated at what appeared to the majority of those present to be a casual conversation on a topic gleaned from the daily papers. The mention of Gallowglass, and still more so of the land agent's name, had caused him to tremble.

He felt called upon to act, and, walking across to the counter, he said, with that duplicity which comes by nature to many Irishmen of his breeding: "Can any of yez men tell me how far is it to Donnycarney from here?"

"Aw, about five mile, I s'pose!" replied Mr. Quisk, turning his back upon him. "You'll have to cross the city skyow-ways, what they call, aw, diagonally. Donnycarney is north-east, an' where y'are presently is south-west or west of Dublin, aw, of the city."

"Well, that's all right!" said O'Rylan. "I'm going there all the same, as soon as I have another pint an' make a call up the road there. But I'd walk sixty mile, aye, or six hunderd mile, to serve ould Ireland, so I would. I hope I'll live to see her free. That's my prayer, gentlemen. God save Ireland!"

"Hear, hear!" "Bravo!" "Have a lap!" and many other expressions of applause greeted the sentiment uttered by O'Rylan, who accepted a drink from the flabby-faced man, and soon afterwards left the shop, directing his steps not north-east to Donnycarney, but south-west towards the Naas Road, along which he walked and disappeared into the darkness of the night.

[1] "The City Coroner, Dr. J. E. Kenny, has called attention to two matters which demand the immediate intervention of the authorities. One is the practice of medical students, given to pranks and jokes, throwing into the Liffey or leaving in some public place portions of dead bodies which they obtained for dissecting purposes. This ghastly form of what some of these young men consider fun ought to be stamped out sternly. If one medical student detected was brought up and punished severely, and banned from his profession as a consequence, no more trouble on this score would be given to the police or terror to the public. We call the attention of the authorities to this very grave nuisance, and urge them to make an example of the first delinquent to whom the offence is brought home. There are several suspects known to some of the hospitals, and it would be humane and useful to have them watched and caught in the act regarding which complaint is made."—*Irish Daily Independent*, June 11, 1896.

[2] Anonymous street ballad.

[3] The words "out of" coming before a word beginning with a consonant are almost always pronounced "our."

CHAPTER IX

"Then, Oro, come with me, come with me, come with me,
Oro, come with me! Brown girl, sweet!"
—Sir Samuel Ferguson.

The scene of action now shifts to John O'Dowla's level, well-fenced farm at Garekiln, which was considered the best take in the barony of Killafastare, a holding three hundred acres in extent, possessing prime soil and a good water supply, and situate within three miles of the Gallowglass fairs and markets.

A week or ten days had elapsed since the eviction of Mrs. Pinkerry and the slaying of Mr. Culvert's horse. No prosecutions had ensued, and the perpetrators of the outrage were imbued with fresh confidence for the approaching contest with the "hydra of landlordism." Outsiders were actually beginning to hope that Gallowglass was about to settle down once again into its wonted quietude, but those who saw beneath the surface did not share that sanguine view.

It was a crisp, dry, bracing autumn day, and Hugh O'Dowla, mounted on Rose, his handsome, jet-black, four-year-old mare, remarkable for her white hind fetlock and a large white star on her forehead, rode into the yard at Garekiln about noon. Stopping before the stable door, he threw his right leg over the mare's neck and paused contemplatively for a moment before suffering himself to glide over the glossy saddle to the earth; but before he touched ground, and while he was in a position of impotence on the mare's side, a tall girl glided from behind a chestnut tree which grew in front of the stable.

The apparition was so sudden that the mare snorted and galloped off towards the cow-houses, where Donoghue Spilltan held up his hands to stop her, shouting,

"Whee! Whoa! Back! Sh! Pr-r-r-ruh!" and many other interjections, which only served to alarm Rose, causing her to tread on her reins and break them, and finally to scamper out through an open gate into the House Field, where she pranced away, and kicked her heels up in delight at her unexpected enfranchisement.

Hugh O'Dowla found himself firmly gripped by the arm and dragged into the stable.

"Let me go, Moll Carew!" he said.

"No, Masthur Hugh, I woan not," said the girl, who had the physique of a young giantess. They wrestled, but she deftly stretched him on his back in the barley straw in one of the stalls. There she kept him firmly down, pinning his arms against the ground and laughing into his face—her teeth white as a young dog's, her lips red and thick, her skin brown from sun, wind, rain, and infrequent washing, her blue-black hair loose and falling to the ground, her clothes covering her merely, and incapable of being described in detail.

Mary or Molly Carew, the Colleen Moor, or Big Girl, was only seventeen years old; but, being "of a large Prodestun' breed," as Mrs. Arnill said, she was several inches taller and broader, and several stones heavier, than the Garekiln native of her own age and sex.

"How comes that Molly to be so gross?" said Mrs. Spilltan. "The Carews ates as little mate is ourself. For though the father is a Prodestun', they're poor, though not is poor is meself, so far is a body kin exarb;[1] but the mother is wan of us, may be that's the raison."

"If they hasn't the mate now," retorted Mrs. Arnill, "thim the father springs from had, you may be sure; else where did the childerr get the bones they has? An' whey's your sinses gone? Haven't they is much sheep's milk is they like to drink, from the ewes that yeans airly in the year, whin their lambs is sold fat for th' Ayster Market?"

As a matter of fact William Carew's parents were Derry Presbyterians. His father had settled in Kildare,

in the position of steward to a gentleman of property. At that time Presbyterian churches were few and far between, outside the borders of Ulster, and William Carew, though he was reared a Christian, never became a member of any particular church.

His parents died when he was still in his teens, and, on the recommendation of his father's employer, he had come to Gallowglass to fill the post of under-gamekeeper, in the halcyon days when the Honourable Mr. De Racques reigned over the barony of Killafastare. William Carew took a fancy to the daughter of a small farmer near Gallowglass. She was a Roman Catholic, and he, being utterly indifferent on the question of religion, joined with her in signing a pre-nuptial contract, drawn up by the priests, in which Carew bound himself, first, to have all his children baptized in the Roman Catholic Church and brought up in that religion; and second, not to interfere with his wife's religious beliefs and practices. Mrs. Carew, moreover, bound herself to use every means in her power to convert her husband to the Roman Catholic religion; for, indifferent as he was, he had refused to become a Roman Catholic, though strongly urged to do so.[2]

The nearest Presbyterian church was situated twenty miles away, and for twenty years William Carew did not go to "church, mass or meeting." But, within the last year, a small meeting-house had been erected in Gallowglass, in which worship was conducted on Sabbath days by a Presbyterian missionary clergyman; and to the astonishment of everyone, himself included, Carew attended the services. During the twenty years of his married life, he never had had a single religious dispute with his wife, who was an exceedingly superstitious woman. He allowed her to bring up all their children under the direction of the priests; nor did he, since the building of the little meeting-house, endeavour in any way to induce his children to accompany him to the services.

William Carew, then, might be said to be a Kildare man, having been born in "the land of short grass";

but Gallowglass knew nothing of Kildare, and held it as an axiom that all Ireland, north of itself, was barren and mountainous. Therefore, William Carew was called "a mountaineer" by Mrs. Arnill, and Mrs. Spilltan, and all the labourers in the neighbourhood.

Hugh O'Dowla was at length allowed to sit up, but while he gathered breath as he picked the straws off his clothes and hair, Molly Carew remained on her knees beside him, her hands on his shoulders.

"William'll never con[3] me again," said Molly, gasping for breath.

"Has your father beaten you, then?"

"I'm black an' blue all over. See! An' all because I stayed here talkin' in the yard last night."

"Did he know where you were, then?" asked Hugh.

"No. I said I was kep' in Mahernacrow, waitin' for the message the mawth[4] sent me for," she said in a low voice; adding in a whisper, "But he must have suspected, for he flammed me in a fearful fashion. I can't go home to-night. That'll pay him off; 'tis th' oany way I knows."

Molly Carew inherited much of the independence of spirit of her father's ancestors, but she had been badly reared by her superstitious mother. Following an objectionable custom prevalent amongst the lower classes in many parts of Ireland, Mrs. Carew had instructed her children to call their father by his Christian name, and thereby did much to subvert the discipline of the household.

"I suppose I may stand up now?" said Hugh O'Dowla.

"Wait a bit, maw shay dhu hulla!" Molly replied wickedly. "I'm goin' to stay out all night in the lime-kiln in Brady's Wood. I have a bed made of ferns and cut rushes. What d'ye think o' that?"

"They say that place is haunted," said Hugh.

"I swore I'd stay out to-night, an' out I'll stay. Look!" she exclaimed, baring an arm and displaying several black marks on the flesh. "I could show you more too," and she pointed to other parts of her body.

They were now standing on the paved passage in the

centre of the stable between the stalls. Suddenly a loud clattering of hoofs was heard, followed by the crash of a horse jumping; and then Rose appeared at the stable door, nostrils blowing, sides heaving, reins broken, stirrups flung over her loins. She looked in, gave a loud neigh, entered, and trembling with excitement, took her place in her own stall.

"Fly!" said Hugh. "They'll be coming in after Rose!"

"Who?" exclaimed the girl.

Hugh O'Dowla went to the stable door and looked out. "Here's my father!" he said, "and I declare to God, your father is with him with a whip in his hand!"

Molly Carew seemed at bay. She drew herself up to her full height, her full breast heaved and her nostrils quivered; but her lips were firmly closed, and she cast her hazel eyes round the stable in a piercing scrutiny. "I'll hide here," she whispered, and sprang into the darkest stall and crept under the manger, sheltering behind the wooden support in which was fixed the ring through which the halter chain ran and was made fast to a movable wooden block.

"Pup-pup, pup-pup, poo!" said John O'Dowla, stick uplifted, coming into the stable followed by William Carew. The erring mare, shivering with excitement, shrank at sight of the stick; and John O'Dowla, who had no sympathy with pleasure horses, struck Rose on the hip-bone, causing her to rear with pain. His son Hugh ground his teeth, endeavouring to suppress his rage, and felt the blow almost as keenly as if he had received it himself. William Carew blushed in confusion at John O'Dowla's violence.

"Don't kill the mare!" said Hugh quietly.

"She'll go to the plough to-morrow, amoshta!" said John O'Dowla hotly.

"Did you make that fine whip yourself, William?" asked Hugh, taking Carew's heavy ash crop and sheepskin whip in his hand, being anxious to change the conversation.

"I med it meself," said William Carew, who now occupied the post of herd or caretaker on an out-farm, belonging to the Earl of Gallowglass, which was situated a mile or two from Garekiln. He was reputed one of the gentlest of men, and was a favourite with farmers and workmen, always ready to help and never willing to take payment; a largely-built man with a slight stoop, and a slow deliberate walk, as if he were wading though chickens just out of the shell. "I got the plant for the crop this time two year, in Brady's Wood, 'twas a nate sapling. 'Tis well saisoned now. An' the hide," he went on, as if centuries were at his disposal, "I med it of fongs cut our the skin of a hogget that died o' the scour, an' I tanned it meself."

"'Tis a good whip!" said Hugh, handing it back to him, "and it seems quite new."

"I never brought it out before," said Carew.

"What did you bring it out for to-day then?" asked Hugh with innocent eagerness.

"For the lassie," replied William Carew. "She's out since mornin' without a bit to ate, an' the wife's onaisy. I bet her, an' she med off! I did it to try an' save her from worse. She's gettin' into bad habits."

"Surely to goodness, you won't strike her with that!" exclaimed Hugh in consternation.

John O'Dowla, who had been listening attentively to Carew's words, said: "Surely he will though! Why wouldn't he? Begor, if we don't bate 'em, William, they'll bate ourselves! Pup, pup, pup, pup! Give it to her, back, belly an' sides, when you catch her!" He directed a stroke at Rose, as he spoke, and the irritated mare in self-defence threw a sidelong kick at him, which, if he had received it, would have killed or maimed him.

"Look at that for you!" he exclaimed, turning to Carew for sympathy. "Give me that whip a minute, William! I'll teach her a lesson."

But Carew, who could not strike anything without great provocation, walked out of the stable, pretending not to have heard the request.

"To the plough you'll go, me doxy; plenty o' the red earth an' little o' the manger you'll get, me damsel," said O'Dowla, following Carew, who cracked his long white whip as skilfully as a circus ringmaster, when he got into the open yard.

The labourers were breaking off, for it was now dinner hour. Bill Arnill, astride on Blossom's backband, was giving her and Dandy their midday drink at a large boiler of rain water under the dairy spout. Ned O'Larey, the second ploughman, was similarly engaged with Kate and Lassy at the trough near the windlass pump in the centre of the yard. Boosang,[5] the thatcher, Walsh, the cowman, and Donoghue Spilltan were lazily walking over the great dungheap from the cowhouses.

"Did any of yez min see me lassie?" said Carew. "She's away sin mornin'. I hot her for bein' too late of a message last night in Mahernacrow, and she went off this mornin' before breakfast. The wife told me to bate her, and I gev her a few welts o' me strap." He raised his waistcoat and showed them the leather belt round his waist, which supported his trousers. "She's gone away, an' I'm wantin' to scare her home, but I'll not hit her again the day," he added shamefacedly.

Hugh trembled, for he knew that Donoghue Spilltan had seen Molly when the mare took fright.

But with an Irishman's quickness at taking his cue, Donoghue said: "Divil a wan o' me, but I dunno whin I see the Colleen Moor last. I'd hardly know her av I see her!"

"She's growin' greatly," said Walsh. "But av she sees that whip wid ye she'll never go home agin, an' you may fwistle 'Tatter Jack Walsh' for your daughter!"

"I didn't exarb her anywhere!" said Arnill. "In a case I does, I'll send her home at wanst in a purshoot. Girls of her age has a dale o' kimmeens[6] about 'em."

"Wouldn't ye publish her be Din from Ireland at the Gallowglass chapel gates o' Sunday before the cong-erra-gation?" said O'Larey.

"An' at the meetin' that Fireframe, the great alligatay-thur[7] 'll be howldin' in the Castle Field o'

Caherconlish the same day?" said Arnill, reining back his horses, and heading for the stable. "'Twould be a nockillashun[8] to yer mind af ye didn't find her inself."

"How is yer master these times, William?" said John O'Dowla gravely.

"I'm expectin' a call from his honour to-day," replied Carew. "He drives round th' estate wance a month an' ginerally gives meself a call to see how the stock is wid me. He always dines with Colonel Shortfield on the day of his rounds, an' they stays talkin' till morn about estate business. I never sarved a dasenter man nor Mr. Culvert!"

"I wouldn't like to be in his shoes at the present moment," said John O'Dowla.

"They says he's thinkin' o' lavin' an' I hope it ain't true!" said Carew.

"Arnill and O'Larey, let ye go for th' engine an' machine to Murphy's after dinner!" screamed John O'Dowla, issuing his borrowing order grandiloquently. "An' let Donoghue spraddle himself on the dungkey, and go callin' for help to Quisk's, O'Rourke's, Kuddehy's, O'Growney's, and Scarlant's, an' all the other neighbours as usual. We'll be threshin' to-morrow."

Blossom, the great and good iron-grey mare, whose legs were like tree trunks and whose hoofs struck the earth like steam hammers, tramped into her own stall, where Molly Carew lay hiding. The rack and manger were wide enough to save the girl from the mare's iron hoofs, but when Arnill came into the stall to take off the winkers and hang it on the hames, and while he was putting on Blossom's halter, Molly held her breath in terror. But the next moment all danger of discovery was over, and she was shut up with the hungry horses, chewing, snorting, stamping, and tossing back their collars, while the blocks and chains kept running through the rings, and the traces clinked under their bellies as they swung from the backbands.

When a brief interval had elapsed and all were at dinner, a shuttered window, through which hay was pitched from the high level of the haggard, was opened

by a man who entered and climbed down the harness-press. It was Hugh.

"Come out this way!" he said. "Blossom won't hurt you."

As the girl crept out by the great mare's side in safety, her ragged dress caught in a nail, but she tore the piece off, saying laughingly: "A cont[9] off a cut loaf oan't be missed. Wan tear more oan't matter."

"Up with you, here," exclaimed Hugh. "Your father is lighting his pipe at Larey's. Be off while you have time!" He climbed as he spoke; and turned round to give her a helping hand, but she was already beside him, clinging to the frame of the window.

"Fly now!" he said, lifting the shutter.

She flung her arms round his neck and squeezed, till he thought he was in a bear's grip. For an instant she stood by his side irresolute, half a head taller than he; and then she fled, like a redskin, and disappeared behind a hayrick.

Donoghue Spilltan told his mother what he knew about the occurrence when he was peeling his potatoes with his nails and dipping them in the stockfish and onion sauce at dinner.

"I wonders at nothing a half-mountainy girl 'ud do," said Mrs. Spilltan, "for fwy should she behave, sure, whin her own father never bint his knee, nor his father before him, in the confeshn box to a priest nor never sprinkled a drop of Holy Water on himself, nor doan't know what it is to light a blessed candle, nor cross himself nor nauthin'. Nor never had a sprig o' blessed palm at Aisther nor nauthin'!"

"Nor his father nor grandfather before him," added Donoghue, wiping the sour milk from his moustache with the sleeve of his flannel waistcoat. "But even if Carew is a Proddy Waddy[10] inself, William is a daysent fellow, everywan allows that."

"Laws! Laws! Laws!" ejaculated Mrs. Spilltan. "I wouldn't like to be sleepin' with a man that ud ate mate on a Friday af he had it, nor didn't b'lieve in the Mother o' God. Molly's mother must be a quare number,

I fear, to marry a Prodestun. Tuck, tuck, tuck, tuck!" and, as she spoke, she sprinkled some meal on the kitchen floor for the hens.

"Feeny, feeny, feeny!" she added, addressing a brood of ducklings which, it was well known, would not accept "Tuck, tuck, tuck!" as an invitation to themselves.

"'Tis late," said Mrs. Spilltan, who was a capable housewife of her kind. "The sun is up on the coob.[11] I mustn't forget me petteen, I mustn't so, amoshta. Boch! Boch! Boch! I'm comin', I'm comin'!" And she betook herself to the pigsty, from the direction of which ear-splitting cries resounded.

Hugh O'Dowla roamed uneasily about the fields at Garekiln all that afternoon, after he had taken his midday dinner with his father; and it was dusk when he returned to Gallowglass in the evening. Having stabled his mare and taken his supper, he rushed upstairs to his bedroom, taking three steps at each bound. The little chamber was on the second storey of a return-building which projected far into the yard. It was lighted by a bow-window facing eastward, and the moon being full and rising in all her majesty, her rays illuminated a square space on the well-worn carpet. Hugh O'Dowla stood in the silvern light for some minutes, and the young man's thoughts dwelt upon Molly Carew. And suddenly he determined upon an altogether Quixotic and inexcusable course of conduct, nothing less than to go straight out to Brady's Wood and meet Molly Carew there. He endeavoured to convince himself that it was pity for a desolate girl which alone compelled him to adopt this mad resolution, as, with beating heart and feverish brow, he went downstairs, passed quickly through the shop, and, reaching the cool atmosphere of the flags, found a familiar figure waiting for him.

"Well oi!" exclaimed Edward O'Brile, a young man of Hugh's age, using a slang salutation which was then popular in Gallowglass, having been imported from Wales with the coal.

"Wed along, old chap!" replied Hugh, speaking in the same parlance.

"Anything up?" asked young O'Brile.

"There is," said Hugh, taking his friend's arm; and, as they walked along, he told him of his determination to go out to Brady's Wood. The evening was fine and the flags were, as usual, crowded with night-walkers, with whom the young men intermingled as if they were doing the most natural thing in the world.

"A most chivalrous thing, by Jove!" said Edward O'Brile with eager precipitancy.

Like his friend Hugh O'Dowla, young O'Brile was also a gentleman at large. His father proposed to bind him as apprentice to Mr. M'Quibble, the principal attorney in Gallowglass; but Mrs. O'Brile, doubting the compatibility of strict moral rectitude with success in the solicitor's profession, had scruples about giving her approval which were not yet overcome.

In Catholic Ireland thousands of young men are always to be found, gentle, shabby-genteel, middle-class, and poor, who seem to have no object in life and whose characters indicate boiling-point, hot, blood-heat, and lukewarm on the thermometers of uselessness. Although Edward and Hugh had not long been members of this large class, they had already commenced to lose the fervour and bloom of youthful energy as the result of the motiveless existence they led. They were naturally well-inclined, but the education they had received at the Diocesan Seminary had imbued them with a sacerdotal contempt for trade, more marked, however, in Hugh than in his friend Edward. They were encouraged in this sentiment to a large extent by the feelings of discontent prevalent amongst all classes around them, by the constant grumbling of their parents and the freely-expressed envy entertained by the shopkeepers for the professional classes. Indeed, it seemed the highest ambition of every shopkeeper in Gallowglass to make his son a priest, a doctor, or an attorney. The boys were at that dangerous age when the adolescent mind is like a womb in which odious

monsters may be conceived. It is just at this age, when they have not yet become men, but have ceased to be children, that Catholic young men are most neglected by their parents. They are consequently driven to the confessional for solace in those frequently-recurring fits of remorse from which Irishmen suffer after sinning. When relief has been found in sacramental absolution, they are buoyed up by a wave of mental elation; the newly-born pride generally leading to a fresh fall.

"Have ye been boycotted much so far?" asked Hugh, changing the subject of conversation, but keeping his thoughts concentrated on Molly Carew.

"Not at all," replied young O'Brile; "I believe the storm is over."

"Don't halloo till you're our the wood, sir!" whispered a tall, gaunt-looking young man who now sidled up to them.

"Halloa, here's Bugler! Well met, by George!" said Hugh, addressing the newcomer, who, though not on the regular wages list of John O'Dowla's establishment, acted as Hugh's stable-boy.

"Lave ye discuss the matter in the caboose at Wegless's," said the individual addressed as Bugler when he had been apprised of his master's resolution.

"Must we go into a public-house?" asked Hugh laughingly.

"Well, Wegless's is the swell bar o' Gallowglass," said Bugler. "An' 'tis usual to bless a new spec'lation with a wet. I wish to heavens I could be in pubs every hour o' the day! If I was rich, I'd furnish me drawin'-room like Wegless's! 'Tis the oany sumptious place I knows that reminds me o' Heaven!"

They settled down in one of Wegless's many cabooses with three bottles of stout before them, and discussed Hugh's meditated expedition in whispered tones, Bugler being frequently appealed to for his advice.

"You must be terrible hot in your blood entirely," said the stable-boy, "to vamp it out there. Begor, I wouldn't trust myself alone with that girl, fearin' she'd bite me."

As a general rule, words utterly failed to express Bugler's jealous disdain for any girl for whom Hugh happened to take a passing fancy. But in this case there was a special reason for his sarcasm, because Molly Carew's great physical superiority over other girls had long been the object of the boy's admiration. Indeed, all over Ireland, even the humblest are amenable to the influence of beauty in womankind.

"Dang me buttons," he often said, "she have every pint a heifer could raisinably be expected to have; wonderful bone, tip-top action, an' is fur sperrit, 'tis too sperritted she is, if sich a thing were possible. There's great skoach[12] about her!"

His depreciation of her was, therefore, interested.

"She's a good girl," said Hugh hotly, "and she is in great trouble, which gives her a double claim on all our commiseration."

Bugler shook his head up and down, a symptom of incredulity:

"I wouldn't have nothin' to do nor say to anywan connected wid Mr. Culvert at the present time," he said; "'tis oany tin seconds ago since I was talkin' to the groom from the Hall, an' he said that whin the master was settin' off this morn t' inspect th' estate, as he do wan day every month, the misthuss begged of him not to go, for she had a warnin' that somethin' was goin' to happen in the fam'ly."

"Rubbish!" exclaimed Hugh.

"Well, supposin' so, still an' all there's trouble brewin'. I can't say what it is in partikler, but I feels it in th' air like as if I was a hound near a fox cover. There's trouble in store for Mr. Culvert an' Mr. O'Brile. I hears more than wan sayin' so, but they gives no partiklers."

"Did Mr. Culvert go?" asked Edward O'Brile.

"He did, sir," replied Bugler, "an' the groom never expex him home till morn, but he might come home airly to-night."

"How will you explain your absence to your father?" inquired Edward, reverting to Hugh's project and ignoring Bugler's forebodings.

"That I don't know," replied Hugh thoughtfully. "My father comes in to see if I'm safe in bed every night as if I were a baby!"

"I know a plan," said young O'Brile, laughing loudly; "we'll both slip into your house by the back gate an' go up to your bedroom, as we so often did before. You'll go out again, leaving me to sleep in your room. If your governor comes in, he'll see me in bed and he'll think it's all right. I can slide down the roof of the carlinny,[13] which is directly under your window-sill, and can get back to our place. We don't go to bed early. Take Neptune with you though, I wouldn't like to meet him in the yard."

"But what'll your own call[14] say, sir?" asked Bugler. "An' whin all's said an' done, wouldn't meself do well enough to keep the Colleen Moor company?"

"Pshaw!" said Edward O'Brile, "nobody comes to see me in bed. Besides, I expect to be home soon after eleven, unless," turning to Hugh, "your father stays up very late."

It was not the first time that Hugh and Edward had spent a night from home without the previous consent of their parents, having recently accepted an invitation to a country wedding, at which they had keenly enjoyed their forbidden pleasure.

"Did you tell Julia?" asked O'Brile, who, though he did things of which his mother and sisters would, perhaps, have disapproved, yet had never as yet kept anything he had done secret from them, when asked for information as to his doings while away from home.

"Julia!" exclaimed Hugh. "Are you mad?"

Edward drew a long breath, as much as to say that he would not have concealed this thing from Julia O'Dowla.

"Look here, Eddie," said Hugh seriously, "you're the only one I know who admires Julia. But you don't know her, you can't understand! If you were only living in one house with her like me!"

"I wish I was," said Edward simply, and he commenced to hum a popular tune.

At quarter to eleven o'clock that night, when John

O'Dowla went pup-pup-pupping, as usual, to see if his son was in bed, he little suspected that the poll, of which he caught a glimpse, belonged to another man's child. Mr. O'Dowla had a paternal habit of tucking the bed-clothes around his children, and though Edward was swathed in the blankets as tightly as an Egyptian mummy, he had to endure, to his alarm, an additional tuck-in at his back before he was left to pursue his own devices.

John O'Dowla had scarcely composed himself for the night when Edward O'Brile arose, dressed quickly, and, letting himself out through the window, reached his own bedroom in safety.

[1] Observe.
[2] This species of pre-nuptial contract is more stringently enforced than ever in the case of mixed marriages at the present day.
[3] Beat.
[4] Mother.
[5] Beausang. French names are not uncommon in the South of Ireland.
[6] Tricks.
[7] Agitator.
[8] Consolation.
[9] Piece.
[10] Protestant.
[11] Hen-coop. Many of the peasantry twenty years ago did not understand clocks, but the women had devices for reckoning the hour of day by the position of the sunlight on the household fixtures.
[12] Style or bravado.
[13] An open lean-to building for cars; a linhay.
[14] Father.

CHAPTER X

" Now shall the Undertaker square, for once, his loose accounts—
We'll strike, brave boys, a fair result from all his false amounts."
—Charles Gavan Duffy.[1]

As requested by his friend, Hugh O'Dowla took with him his slate-coloured Great Dane, Neptune, and the dog, delighted at his enlargement, jumped and bounded joyously before his master. When the outskirts of Gallowglass had been left behind, Hugh O'Dowla found himself on one of those lonely roads which are so typical of the decadence of modern Ireland. Along the wayside lay the ruins of a dozen farmhouses and labourers' cottages which had been evacuated within twenty years. Even Hugh O'Dowla remembered when the blue smoke used to curl upwards from many of those ruins, and when their brown roofs were wont to display a streak of fresh wheaten thatch every autumn after harvest. The goats and donkeys of two labourers who dwelt a mile or so outside the town, were the only living things he now met with on his way; and the animals looked ghostlike and uncanny, some of them lying prone across the white, silent, moonlit, limestone roadsides, others grazing in the shadows of the dykes. At length the larches of Brady's Wood loomed in sight across a wide valley; and, having speedily covered the intervening distance, Hugh O'Dowla found himself traversing a glen road with Brady's Wood sloping upwards on his right and a steep furze brake on his left. A stream rippled noisily beneath the road at the furze-brake side of this weird and lonesome glen, the larches and the spruces were whispering in the wood, and the Great Dane poked his cheek against his master's side to remind him of his presence.

"Good dog, Neptune! Over, over!" whispered Hugh O'Dowla, as he climbed the road fence and took the hilly path leading to the kiln.

The crackling of the dead branches and fir cones, the grating of the briars against his clothes, his own footfalls and Neptune's shuffling trot seemed noises loud enough to wake the dead. At length he was in front of the kiln, but he neither saw nor heard anything of Molly Carew. He walked round it and climbed to its top, Neptune sniffing the air restlessly. Then a dark figure rose up suddenly from the recess in the kiln. The hound sprang forward with a growl, and it would have fared ill with Molly, if Hugh had not been as quick as his dog and saved the girl from the man-felling propensities of the Great Dane.

"Oh! that mautherra!"[2] gasped Molly. "I'm not bitten at all. Never mind, he only knocked me! Lie down, y' brute!"

Hugh helped her to her feet, took her hand, and said: "I thought you weren't here, and was thinking of going home again. Why didn't you speak?"

"I s'pose I was asleep," she replied. "I'm worn out with trampin' all day long. How could I tell that it was yourself? An' if I were to spake, an' if it was anyone else, what 'ud I do?"

Looking over the edge of the kiln, Hugh saw the white road shining in the moonlight distinctly below; and, after a while, he could trace glimpses of the path by which he had ascended, as it wound up through the wood. Above their heads the tracery of the firs stood black against the sky. For some time neither spoke.

"How dreadful it is to be out at night!" said the girl childishly. "I never before knew how awful it must be to have ne'er a home."

Hugh's good nature was re-awakened, and he said quietly, seizing her hand: "Well, then, don't ever do it again!"

They remained in the kiln for some time, neither could say how long. At length Molly raised herself erect and listened: "Here's a car!" she cried.

Hugh looked over the parapet of the kiln. The car was coming down the hill, the horse stepping very fast, striking fire from the stones occasionally. Hugh could see that it was a trap containing two men. Presently it stopped nearly opposite the kiln; one of the men got out; and the vehicle moved off towards Gallowglass.

"Who can it be?" said Hugh excitedly. He looked at his watch. It was half-past twelve.

"Look!" exclaimed Molly. "There's three men comin' up our the furze brake. There they're spakin' to the man that was in the trap, an' they're all comin' up here. Good God, we're found out!"

The group of men were lost to sight for a moment at the bottom of the wood; but, soon afterwards, they reappeared and came along the path in single file, until they stood before the kiln and vanished into the arch underneath the stone floor on which were the alarmed boy and girl. Hugh clutched Neptune's mouth with both hands, and the sensible dog lay perfectly still, but keenly alert.

"That's a fine night," said someone with a strong Dublin accent, whose voice Hugh did not recognise.

"Very starry!" replied four others in chorus, and some of the voices were familiar to Hugh.

"God bless the work, anyhow!" said the first stranger.

"'Tis for Ireland's sake!" exclaimed the rest.

"Shake hands, comrades!" said the stranger, again.

"Shake hands and God speed!" echoed the others.

"Men!" said the stranger, speaking with earnestness, "for the country's good an' our holy cause, the tyrant must be laid low:

> "The Green alone shall stream above our native field and flood—
> The spotless Green save where its folds are gemmed with Saxon blood!"[3]

"Our part is done, O'Rylan," said a hoarse, unfamiliar voice.

A prolonged whispered consultation took place, from which Hugh only gathered one coherent sentence, uttered in the same wild, hoarse, and repulsive tones:

"Af you makes any bungle in it, Dubliner, I'll cut yer throat open meself as wide as I cut his horse's!"

"Make yer mind aisy," said the first stranger, "I know what to do with him. I learnt from a better master than yerself, O'Grogan:

> "'Let us to our purpose bide,
> We'll have our own again;
> God is on the righteous side,
> We'll have our own again.'"[4]

"The wire is as ferm as a rock," said one of the voices, which Hugh recognised. "No horse that ever lived can step over it athout fallin'. Lave us go down an' be ready to hould it at this side."

"In God's name! God save Ireland! Let us go an' be ready!" said another familiar voice. And the group of men left the shelter of the kiln and went towards the road.

To say that Hugh O'Dowla was appalled at finding himself in such a situation would be a very inadequate description of his emotions; and his alarm was increased by the consciousness that he identified three of the voices as those of Donoghue Spilltan, Dick Quisk, and Moss Scarlant. He could not discern where lay his path of duty. He was oppressed by a guilty conscience. Knowing that his own presence in the wood had no justification, he decided to let events proceed without any interference on his part. Moreover, his action was hampered by the dog, who needed constant restraint. And Hugh lay low in the shadow of a larch tree, holding Neptune by the mouth and peering over the parapet of the kiln, with Molly Carew by his side. The best he could hope for was that his own presence might remain undiscovered; and he breathed more easily when he beheld the five men descending to the road.

A high gig was now coming down the hill, just as the strange man's trap had come. The vehicle, which had only one occupant, was drawn by a grey mare whose white mane flashed in the frost-savouring breeze, her steam-like breath issuing from her distended nostrils.

Down the hill the mare moved like a spirit of the night, her shoes striking sparks from the flinty macadam, until she came just opposite the kiln, when she fell violently, as if tripped up by something drawn across the road, and tumbled clean over her head and out of the shafts.

The ambushed party sprang out on the road and a scuffle ensued, all the men being huddled together in one mass; and a single shriek was heard that woke all the echoes of the glen, which, as Hugh afterwards knew, was the cry of a strong man dying against his will. After this there was silence, save for the frantic struggling of the mare breaking her harness; but her efforts soon ceased, and she lay stark dead, stabbed by the same dagger which had taken her owner's life. Four of the men jumped into the furze brake and were lost to view; but the fifth man was seen running along the road towards the butt of the hill in the direction of Gallowglass. Neptune broke loose and rushed down to the road, baying loudly, his barks, long and high-pitched, running into a banshee-like howl, and waking the echoes on all sides.

"Murder! Murder!" cried Hugh, clambering out of the kiln, his better instinct all aroused, and racing after the flying assassin. But fast as Hugh ran, he was outstripped by Neptune, and presently the dog seized the coat-tails of the fugitive. The stuff tore, and for a moment Neptune found himself at fault. But it was only for a moment. Quickly dropping the cloth he bounded forward again; and this time the dog passed in front of the flying man, as if to meet him face to face. Having got in front, Neptune sprang at the fellow's chest; but suddenly the dog reeled, howled in agony, and fell dead upon the road. When Hugh came up he found his faithful boarhound in spasms, his head being almost severed from the body.

Looking towards the brow of the hill Hugh saw a horse and trap waiting there, and he beheld the fugitive climb into it and drive off quickly towards Gallowglass.

Looking backwards, Hugh found Molly by his side. They were over a hundred yards distant from the spot where the outrage had been committed, and could see the black mass on the white road where lay the dead horse and overturned gig.

"Let us go down and see if we can help!" he said; but as he spoke his eyes fell upon the dead body of the dog, and his resolution seemed to waver. "I often heard," he went on nervously, addressing Molly, "that it was a dangerous thing to find a dead man."

"Is it even supposin' you didn't kill him yourself?" asked the girl.

"Yes," replied Hugh.

"Somewan is after findin' him!" exclaimed Molly. And they heard loud wailing from the foot of the hill, and could see a man gesticulating as if in surprise and anguish over the black mass on the road.

"We're in the wrong in being here at all, Molly!" said Hugh.

"Besides that you have a corpse o' yer own to hide," she said, giving the dog's body a slight kick.

This reminder decided Hugh O'Dowla, and between them they lifted Neptune's body over the fence and laid it in the dyke. The white clouds were drifting across the blue sky, when, having concealed the body of the dog, the young couple stood side by side in an open field outside the wood. Molly sat down and began to cry.

"Let us go away!" said Hugh O'Dowla, and they walked off in the shadow of a fence.

The girl would have rested in every sheltered nook they passed, in their purposeless rambling by the fence-sides for over an hour, but Hugh O'Dowla felt that he could not keep still. His conscience was worrying him almost beyond endurance; but his moral character was as powerless in that hour of trial as his infant body was when his mother bore him. He was a youth prone to moods of softness, quick to sympathise with all that was pleasant in nature and humanity, but repelled by all that was difficult or disagreeable. Even now, as he

looked up at the clouds passing across the blue sky, classical allusions suggested themselves involuntarily to his mind. Molly, who gauged his character with feminine instinct, knew that his spirits were low because he was a victim to remorse.

"I want to go to Gallowglass!" he said hastily.

"Then I'll come too," she said. "We'll stick together now for ever."

"No!" he exclaimed petulantly. He stood and faced her, but quailed before her glance, which now had something mesmeric in it. "Hide anywhere in the fields near Garekiln until nine o'clock in the morning," he continued. "It is threshing day, you know, and I will be out early! For God's sake, let me go quietly!"

It was not easy to win the girl's consent; but at length she said: "I'll be in the fort at the corner of the Well Field at nine o'clock, mind that!"

He felt a momentary triumph at his success, and, without any attempt at hiding his impatience, he rushed away from her side.

How ragged she was as she stood alone, but how gracefully her rags clung to her tall, lithe figure, which was as supple as a sapling—so muscular, so attractive, so embarrassing to every young man in the parish.

The dawn had not yet broken, and it was too early for working men to be about, when Hugh O'Dowla reached his father's back gate without having encountered a human being on his way home. He stole noiselessly up the yard and entered his room by the window which Edward O'Brile had left open. Concluding that his friend had got safely home, Hugh undressed, but decided not to sleep. It was not worth while to sleep, even if one could.

His thoughts ran upon the hideous scene he had witnessed, which he earnestly hoped would prove to have been a nightmare. Then he thought of Molly, but with what altered feelings to those he entertained before he left his room on the previous evening, when he had been building his castles in the air.

Before half-an-hour had elapsed he was asleep, utterly oblivious of the serious trouble in which his own conduct had involved him.

[1] Undertaker or Adventurer was the term applied to the English and Scotch settlers who came to Ireland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
[2] Dog.
[3] Charles Gavan Duffy.
[4] Thomas Davis.

CHAPTER XI

"When constabulary duty's to be done,
A policeman's lot is not a happy one."
—W. S. GILBERT.

THE police barrack at Gallowglass was a large stone structure with armoured windows. It had been thus fortified shortly after the Fenian Rising of 1867, when a rebel had been shot by the police at the barrack door, and a policeman slain by the insurgents on the road to Glenpowerstown. Until the recent outrage at Mrs. Pinkerry's eviction, the years since 1867 had glided by with such peaceful monotony that, although the guard was set and the patrol sent out nightly, those precautions were regarded more as a formality than a necessity. On this particular night on which Hugh O'Dowla had gone to Brady's Wood, Sub-Constable Handy, a North of Ireland man, was on guard. The roll had been called at ten o'clock as usual; eleven o'clock had now long passed, and all was silent as the grave except for the howling of a greyhound or the squealing of a cat.

Sub-Constable Handy, alone in the day-room, pulled one of the iron-legged forms in front of the fire, took down his overcoat from the kit-shelf, folded it into the shape of a pillow and placed it at one end of the well-scrubbed, twelve-inch plank that constituted the seat of the form. Then Handy lit his pipe, unhooked his belt, contrary to rule, and laid it on the table behind him with its handcuff pouch and bayonet. Then he gazed round at the bare, yellow, limewashed walls of the day-room, opened his legs as wide apart as they would go, lighted his timber pipe and took a long contemplative smoke of John O'Dowla's strongest and blackest coil tobacco.

"Heigh-ho!" sighed Handy. "'S well for every counter-jumper of 'em tha's abed the noo. Wha' blinded me tell sacrifice all ma prospects in life till become a Const'blary man? What 'm I after all, bur a bobby, or a peeler, ay, or a dungkey-ketcher, gild it as they will? A serf, a lackey, a bondsman till that little cur, that jack'napes of a Sub-Inspector!"

In thus giving vent to a low opinion of the constituted authorities, Handy was typical of the Force, amongst whose members the backbiting of officers is a favourite relaxation.

Then Handy put by his pipe and let his body fall slowly back on the form, till his head touched the overcoat. Hoisting his legs on to the seat, he drew forth a large handkerchief from his breast and spread it over his face to keep off the light of lamp and fire; and before many minutes had elapsed the day-room became resonant with a subdued snore. But so trained was the policeman's ear, that if the faintest knock was given at door or window, he would have jumped to his feet, buckled on his belt, restored his handkerchief to its proper place as chest-expander inside his tunic, placed his foraging cap on the left side of his head with its glazed strap under his lower lip, and presented himself inside the chained, locked and bolted door with a "Who goes there?" in his deepest constabularial tones.

After the lapse of an hour or so, a tap was heard at the large, barred window of the day-room, the half-inch armour shutters of which were firmly fastened on the inside.

Handy arose at once: "The patrol back. Ha, it'll be wan o'clock!" looking at his yellow-faced silver watch.

"Who goes there?"

"Friend."

"Pass, friend." The door chain fell, and Acting-Sergeant Drydoss and Constable Webbilly entered, with their rifles slung on their shoulders.

"An'thing up at Ball'glanders, Corporal?" asked Handy.

"Naught a screed, sirry! Not a mouse stirring, me son," said the acting-sergeant.

"Not a, not a, goat geggin', nor an ass brayin', a vickyo!" added Constable Webbilly, a youth fresh from the Depôt in the Phœnix Park.

"Right y'are, me bucko!" said Handy, in his fast northern way. "Everything'll sell down nows 'twas fur man year afore."

"You can never tell that," replied the acting-sergeant, as he wrote out his regulation report. "Whin all the rest o' the country is disturbed why should this place escape?"

"Di' ye mit the Ma'rnacrow nin?" asked Handy, lighting his pipe.

"Ay, did we," said the recruit. "An' look at here! D'ye know what, Flaherty has a sure thing for the Grand National already."

"I'd p' half-crown on't, ayther ways, first o' month," replied the guard. "If I war a betting man, which am not. Flarty's tip's good."

The report being finished, the patrol went to bed, leaving Handy to his pipe and the solitude of the day-room. He had concluded his smoke, released his waist, drawn the handkerchief over his head and had slept he knew not how long, when a knock was heard at the door.

"Gorramight!" cried he, as he put on his belt, and adjusted his uniform. A long thumping at the door followed.

"Who's air?" shouted the guard.

"A messinger fram Mr. Brile to say the reeks in Ballyglanders is all afire," said a voice, and without waiting for further colloquy the bearer of the alarming intelligence ran off.

Handy forthwith called the patrol, and after an interval of ten minutes, Drydoss and Webbilly were standing in the day-room, fully accoutred and ready for action, awaiting the appearance of Head-Constable M'Petty.

Again there was a loud knocking at the door.

"Who's air?" shouted the North of Ireland man savagely.

"'Tis oi, Din! Din, doant shee know Din? Meself. Din?"

"Whar y' mane?" hissed Handy. "D'ye want till b' arrested for disturbin' the pace?"

"I'm Din from Ireland, wanst for all!——"

"Yer drunk," said Handy. "I'll din you damn soon!" Having loosened the chain, the sub-constable stepped out on the flags, and clutched the ragged shoulders of Din from Ireland, the parish publisher, bellman and billposter, whose sallies about beasts lost, stolen, or strayed, made the congregation laugh on Sundays after each mass.

"Thonnamondeel![1] Lay go me showlder!" cried Din. "Don't assault me, I'm tellin' y' now! Don't misuse me, I'm tellin' yeh! Af I'm poor, I'm daysint from wan side! Mind y' that now for y's! I'm tellin' y' now!"

"Yer drunk!" hissed Handy, shaking Din from Ireland until the wretched man's teeth felt as if they would fall from his head.

"Oh! Gad 'lmighty! Oh, Mother o' God!" bawled the man, resisting with all his strength. "Mr. Culvert is murdered above at Brady's Wood, an' his mare an' trap all kilt an' smashed. Oh! Aw! Ooh! an' the bobbies are killin' me, killin' me, for comin' to tell." The street re-echoed with his howls, and the constable desisted for a moment from his effort to push the man into the barrack hall.

"Thonnamondeel! Take off your belt, an' I'll fight you fair!" said Din, recovering his breath. "Gi' me rayson an' I'll fight y'!"

Just at this moment Edward O'Brile, hurrying off to the fire at Ballyglanders, happened to pass by and distinctly heard the announcement of the Land Agent's murder at Brady's Wood. Bugler's words recurred to him, but at the same instant he thought of Hugh O'Dowla.

"He's dead, kilt! that I mightn't draw another breath

if he isn't," shouted Din from Ireland in tones plainly audible all over the silent street. "Kilt, stabbed, dead, an awful butchery at Brady's Wood overright the kiln. I was goin' to Mahernacrow to post a hanfle o' bills for the people to read the first thing in the mornin' at the fowl market, an' on me way I seen, I seen— Ochone, ochone, if me mother saw me now! But she's in heaven, I ax God's pardon— Mother o' God, purtect me!"

The wretched man began to make crosses on his face with his thumb and to spit around him as if to banish evil spirits.

The Head-Constable and the patrol now emerged from the barrack; and Din from Ireland was prevailed upon to enter the building, though he did so with great reluctance, and considerable misgivings as to whether he should ever again emerge in freedom from its portals.

As he went in Edward heard him say: "The mare, trap, an' all kilt and smashed. I'm in the horrors from the sight. Sich blood! I never thought a natural bein' cud hould so much of it in 'em. Get me a drop o' whisky, or I'll die this minute! I'll die, I'm tellin' y'!"

"G'long in!" said Handy, mustering all his strength and hurling the man inside the door, which was at once banged to.

"What am I to do?" thought Edward, who had been listening in the shadow some distance off. His father's dearly-purchased hay, which had been hurriedly made up into ricks in Mrs. Pinkerry's haggard, was burning at Ballyglanders, and it seemed as if his first duty lay there; but, on the other hand, his friend might be in danger at Brady's Wood. The young man made up his mind to go to the assistance of his friend, and clearing out of the town at a quick pace, he did not halt once to draw breath until he reached Brady's Wood. Being a stranger to the locality he had some difficulty in finding the path to the kiln. As he was seeking his way in the moonlit dawn, he fancied he saw a tall figure glide behind a larch trunk. He rushed to the tree and

searched all round it, but discovered nothing. After some time he came to the kiln, but, though he tried every nook in it, he saw nothing except the bed of dried ferns, pressed by the human figure and telling its tale to the observant eye as obviously as the kennel of a fox or the form of a hare. He heard a step behind him, and, looking quickly round, saw a figure disappearing behind a larch as before. Racing towards the tree, he discovered Molly Carew standing behind its whitish-green trunk, bare-headed, bare-necked, and motionless as a listening doe, and seeming as much at home as if she were a wood-nymph.

"She's mad!" was Edward's first thought, when he gazed upon the abstracted girl, who neither spoke nor looked at him.

"Where's Mister O'Dowla?" asked Edward O'Brile.

"What do you want him for?" she asked.

"A murder was committed here last night. You were with my friend Hugh O'Dowla: tell me is he dead or alive?"

"He's alive," she said.

"I want him. He must come home. The police will be here in a moment, and if he is caught or if you're caught, ye'll be arrested. For God's sake, tell me where he is!"

"How do I know?" said the girl, standing firmly at bay, her lips sealed, her back pressed against the larch trunk, like a wild creature of the woods. To young O'Brile, she seemed demoniacal. He detested her blue-black hair, her red-brown face, her red lips, her white teeth, her size, her strength, her dumb obstinacy. He searched the kiln again and also the wood in a circle round it; but, finding no clue, he returned to where Molly Carew stood.

"I'll go home," he said. "I'll hope that Hugh is in bed and asleep by this."

"No, sir, you won't go home," said Acting-Sergeant Drydoss, jumping at him from above and clutching him by the coat, and tearing away his collar, tie, and shirt-front, in doing so. "Mr. Culvert was murdered

MOLLY CAREW'S ESCAPE FROM THE POLICE

"She stooped and, turning to the left, jumped clear over a bank of briars which would have daunted Roland Glenpower's best hunter. As she rose the policeman discharged his rifle; but he evidently missed, for Molly Carew alighted on her supple toes on the other side of the briars," &c.—p. 133.

below on the road last night and we arrest you on suspicion."

"Arrest me, Mr. Drydoss?" exclaimed young O'Brile in consternation.

"I'll have to do it," said the acting-sergeant.

Meantime Molly was standing by the tree, as if she were petrified.

"Seize that girl, Webbilly!" cried Drydoss.

But, like a deer awakened, Molly sprang off into a thicket of briars.

"Fire! fire! if she don't stop," cried Drydoss.

"Stand, or I fire!" cried Webbilly, bringing his loaded rifle to his shoulder. But Molly did not stay.

Webbilly pulled his trigger and a charge of buckshot whizzed over the flying girl's head, splintering one of the larches. She was running like a roe along a green path between banks of briars, and had not wavered at the explosion which reverberated through the wood.

Drydoss released Edward O'Brile, who pledged his honour not to leave the spot, and fired also; but the girl raced up the slope unhurt as yet. She seemed to have made good her escape, when, lo! a third policeman appeared straight in front of her and aimed at her point blank. She stooped, and, turning to the left, jumped clear over a bank of briars which would have daunted Roland Glenpower's best hunter.

As she rose, the policeman discharged his rifle; but he evidently missed, for Molly Carew alighted on her supple toes at the other side of the briars. Then she ran off and disappeared over the crest of the hill, escaping the shots of Drydoss and Webbilly, who had reloaded and fired again.

She was safe for the present. A lady's pug would be as likely to catch a fox in his covert, as one of these carefully-equipped soldier-policemen would be to catch Molly Carew amongst those trees and brakes whose windings she knew so intimately.

The policemen were abashed.

"We have this bird caught, anyway!" said Drydoss, taking his gleaming steel handcuffs out of his brightly

polished pouch, where they had lain unused since last Gallowglass fair, when, as usual, arrests for drunkenness had been numerous.

Edward O'Brile had been reared, like the sons of other well-to-do Gallowglass shopkeepers, to regard respectability as the greatest blessing in life, and to look upon disgrace and poverty as *prima facie* crimes.

"Don't handcuff me, for God's sake!" he pleaded.

"Indeed, faith, I will!" said Acting-Sergeant Drydoss, unlocking the handcuffs. "Tut, tut, is it after all that firing not to handcuff you?"

"You must be very green, Mister O'Brile," said Webbilly.

"I'm amazed, so I am, at finding your father's son in such company," said Head-Constable M'Petty.

Edward said nothing. It appeared to him as if the end of time had arrived, and judgment was at hand. Though pressed for an explanation, he would not say why he had been in the wood, or whom he had gone out to see.

"Surprising ne'er a wan o' thim shots proved fattle," said Drydoss, as he and Webbilly moved off with Edward handcuffed between them.

"I wander mine didn't," replied the recruit. "No aim could be fairer than the wan I took square at her back. My Gosh, if my shot struck her they'd be two inquests instead of wan!"

"We'll never take her now, except be some damn clever russ or stratijim!" said Drydoss. "We must plan out a first-rate russ!"

[1] "Your soul to the devil!" One of the most frequently used Irish curses.

CHAPTER XII

"Alanna, alanna, the shadow of shame
Has never yet fallen on one of our name."
—*Ballad of '98.*

It was half-past seven A.M.

"Above! Above!" screamed John O'Dowla from the first landing. He received no answer, but was not astonished. He opened the oblong glass door of the clock on the landing and set the pendulum going. The hands indicated ten minutes to eleven, the hour at which he had stopped the clock when going to bed last night.

"I wish you'd let that clock go on all night, John," said Mrs. O'Dowla from the bedroom.

"I know you would. I know that well, Mrs. O'Dowla, for you have the Pensers' extravagant nature in you. Isn't it enough, don't you think, to have a watch workin' away in yer bedroom for the night, without havin' a clock goin' on the landin' besides? If I could stop the watch, I'd lave the clock go on. The clock'll last twice as long for givin' it a rest at night, the same as ourselves." His apparel consisted of night-shirt, trousers and slippers, and, having set the clock to the proper time, he returned to his bedroom, where his wife, already dressed, was saying her prayers at the bedside.

"Pup, pup, pup!" said he, "'tis a grand morning. We'll be threshing to-day, please God."

"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," said Mrs. O'Dowla earnestly, striking her breast and rattling her substantial beads as she knelt by the bed.

"Pup, pup-pup, pup-pup! Tw-oh! tw-oh!" said her husband. "Grand entirely, 'tirely, 'tirely! Pup, pup,

pup! Glory be to God!" he continued as he looked out upon the beloved Main Street of Gallowglass.

"Yerra, dress yourself, man, or you'll get cold and be bothering us coughing night an' day!" said Mrs. O'Dowla, turning round, and interrupting her prayers for a moment.

"Mind your own business, woman!" said John. "You have a large order on hands at present." John O'Dowla prayed very little himself; confining his orisons to the *Our Father*, *Hail Mary*, *I Believe in God*, and *I Confess*, as did almost all the men in Gallowglass. He could not afford the luxury of a rosary and a litany morning and evening. In his opinion one saint in any household was enough, provided the other inmates went regularly to their religious duties at Christmas and Easter. John felt that if rosaries and weekly confessions and communions could do it, Mrs. O'Dowla would bring the family through with éclat on the last day.

There were not many shopkeepers' wives in Gallowglass as holy as Mrs. O'Dowla; though most of the Gallowglass women stood high in the good graces of Father O'Darrell. There were some men, including Mr. Pat O'Pollards and Mr. Maurice Sawnuch, who went to the convent mass at seven every morning, and to communion every Sunday at first mass in the parish chapel; but John O'Dowla and most of the other shopkeepers looked upon those men, in the violent vernacular of Gallowglass, as "damn hypocrites," and held them in contempt as "craw-thumpers" and "altar-scrapers."

Rushing in breathless from the street, John O'Dowla would say, in a stage whisper to his wife inside the counter: "Look out, ma'am, at the weekly communicant. Quick, or you'll lose it!"

Then, as the "craw-thumper" rolled by, more or less inebriated, alone or in company with his associates, Mrs. O'Dowla would say: "Oh! oh! oh! the Lord be praised, it must be a wakeness he got, John!"

"Wakeness how are you?" John would say. "His

craw is full o' whisky. 'Tis a strong wakeness he has, twenty-five over proof, the damn altar-scraper!"

"Baytherr shin!"[1] Mrs. O'Dowla would say; "I s'pose you knows best."

But to return to the O'Dowla toilet. Having put on his socks, John waddled out again to the landing.

"Above! Above!" he screamed. No reply being vouchsafed, he waddled back again into the bedroom.

"Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death, amen!" Mrs. O'Dowla said, putting her whole soul into the prayer as she had heard her mother do before her.

John O'Dowla put on another garment and waddled out again to call his son; but, getting no reply, he waddled back again and commenced to shave, for this was the Gallowglass market day, and, notwithstanding the threshing at Garekiln, he must needs remain in the shop, certainly until noon, and possibly all day, to speak to the customers and assist the clerks in serving them. Twice with his face lathered he waddled out to call his son, but got no answer. Half-an-hour before John O'Dowla had got up, Mrs. O'Dowla had been bawling similarly at the servants, the shopmen and apprentices, and had routed them up to their work. Hugh O'Dowla, being a harder case and less important, was always left for his father.

The door of Julia's room was within a yard of where John stood screaming, and she, being wide awake, heard every word; as she had done every morning from time immemorial. Nobody called her, as there were no duties for her to perform; and she generally came down to a late breakfast by herself, when all the others were done. What her thoughts were as she lay on her bed of Gallowglass goose-down, and heard her father screaming himself hoarse outside her door, no earthly being knew aright. Perhaps her confessor got the benefit of her waking thoughts, but no one at home ever did.

"Julia reads an' thinks a dale," said Mrs. O'Dowla, "but I sees nothing cum of it. I never thought for five minutes together at a stretch in me life, except to

examine me conscience before going to make me confession. Thinkin' goes with blinkin' an' is only fit for cats an' dogs, I think, and poor, ragged, shiftless bodies that sits at the flag of their door with their jaws in their hands and their elbows on their knees. If I was to think I'd go to the poorhouse or th' asylum for certain, an' the shop 'ud go to the wall!"

"What have you to think about?" demanded her husband. "Isn't it enough to have wan brain workin' in any household of moderate size?"

"Baytherr shin! Baytherr shin!" replied Mrs. O'Dowla sceptically. "An' she's mostly always readin' too," resumed Mrs. O'Dowla, heedless of the interruption. "I often wonders what thim books is for? Me mother used to say 'twas to give people an oppurtunity of spakin' to dead people, but, as for meself, I'm like me mother, an' the livin' people around me keeps me goin' all me time to be up to 'em. Many the daysent man an' woman is dead that never wrote in a book: if I was put to it, I'd go is far is to say that few daysent mimbers ever wrote books. I bleeve 'twas mostly people with nothing to do. Noan of our family ever did any book-writin' anyhow!"

"What do you know about books, woman?" said her husband, with that ferocity of expression so characteristic of Irishmen and so entirely unintelligible to Englishmen. Indeed, the rudeness of Irish folk to one another, especially noticeable amongst members of the same family, near relatives and people on terms of intimacy, stands in glaring contrast to their politeness to strangers, before whom they display a winsomeness and an eagerness to please which is one of their most agreeable characteristics.

"Not a great dale surely," said Mrs. O'Dowla; "but still an' all, from all I hears, they're disturbin' things to know much of. Readin', an' readin', an' readin', but doin' nothin', not a hand's turn. Don't the head ever get full like a churn or a pot?"

"Never, it is like the ground in dry weather an' soaks it all," replied John O'Dowla sagely.

"Soaks it till 'tis all slush and gutter, I suppose. Ah, me! If readin' is th' only way o' fillin' a body's head, mine must be dry an' impty," sighed Mrs. O'Dowla; "an' impty 'twill stay, for if I was to live to be as old as me grandmother I'll never start to fill it."

"Don't!" said her husband; "if you did, your brains might all run down an' pitch in your nose, like Father Filltubber, who said that 'twas from overstudyin' theology an' mensuration he had a nose like a boiled lobster."

The calling of his son and his own dressing proceeded layer upon layer, until at length John O'Dowla was fully arrayed, ready to invade his son's castle of indolence and tear off the bed-clothes. At that critical moment, Hugh answered his father's call by instinct and warded off the parental attack.

"Hasten down, you sir, an' go out to the farm to see after the threshing!" yelled John O'Dowla as he tramped downstairs to read the paper until breakfast.

John O'Dowla freely expressed it as his opinion that all the Irish landlords should be shot. He had been saying so, since harvests began to be bad. But as everyone knew him for a thrifty, law-abiding man, they only laughed at him.

"Don't shoot any landlords down here, John, 'till I see you again," Roland Glenpower would say in a loud voice, as he bade him good-bye at the shop door on a fair evening and rode off on one of his fine, weight-carrying hunters.

Another and a saner article of O'Dowla's political creed was that lawyers should be excluded from the House of Commons. "As long as the lawyers are there, nobody can make head or tail o' th' Acts o' Parliament," he would say, whenever he cut into a discussion on law or politics. "'Tis the lawyers' business to make the law puzzling. They couldn't live if it was simple and plain like your business or mine, or any other honest way of living!" But none of his friends in Gallowglass could follow him into the depths of that speculation.

John O'Dowla was reading the morning paper now in the parlour off the shop, his mouth wide open as usual, not heeding an animated conversation which was going on amongst a group of women outside, until he heard his wife's voice exclaiming: "Hold me, Mrs. Fitz! I'm going to faint! Oh, Queen of Angels! Mother of God! Ahh! Ahh! Oh!"

John shut his mouth and got up. "What the devil is the meaning of this?" said he, appearing at the parlour door.

"Oh, John! John!" shrieked his wife, who was reclining in the arms of a couple of milkwomen to whom she had been talking, and whose milk-cans and head-rolls lay on a side counter.

"My God Almighty, woman, don't make a show of yourself!" he exclaimed, looking very fiercely at her.

"Mr. Culvert is stabbed an' killed dead!" cried Mrs. O'Dowla. "Oh!—O!—O!—Oo!—Oo!"

"What?" cried her husband.

"Last night, at Brady's Wood," cried the first woman.

"An' the trap all broke an' the fine gray mare kilt," cried the second, flinging up her hands in front of her face, and then slapping them down against her knees.

"Get out o' me way, ye beldames!" cried John O'Dowla. "Ye don't know what ye're saying. Lay me out; lay me out, meself!" And he rushed bareheaded to the police barrack, which was some distance down the street, where he verified the information.

Words failed him when he heard the correct story. "Pup, pup, pup, pup! Glory be to God!" were his first words as he stalked out of the barrack, his hands clasping the paper behind his back. "Pill-aloo! pill-aloo! Allaloo! Alla-fut-ay-futay-fut-ay!"

A glance of his experienced eye up and down the Main Street, showed him that everyone out of doors was as wise as himself. The very dogs standing in the middle of the roadway, sniffing each other confidentially, seemed to be aware that something portentous had happened. In truth, the murder of the land agent occasioned a universal sensation of morbid excitement,

much alarm, even some consternation, but no grief. Though the town had not taken a prominent part in the agitation its inhabitants felt, nevertheless, that casualties on the landlords' side made for progress; and whenever the assassination of a landlord, agent, or bailiff had been reported in the newspapers during the past two years, a subdued gleam of satisfaction shone in the face of Gallowglass, a phenomenon which did not escape the notice of the police.

John O'Dowla strutted up and down the flags before his own door for some minutes ejaculating: "Pup, pup, pup! my God Almighty!" And presently he was joined by Mr. Wegless, the publican, and his collie dog, from across the street; by Mr. Patrick O'Pollards, a publican-baker, and his bull-terrier, from up-street; by Mr. Sporeen, a publican-draper from down-street; by Mr. Sawnuch, a publican-butcher; and by many others, including Thomas O'Brile, who had not long returned from Ballyglanders, where it had been found impossible to save the blazing ricks of hay.

"'Twas a shame, John O'Dowla; I care not who did it!" said Mr. O'Brile.

"Awful!" exclaimed John O'Dowla. "Lay me alone about it. I dunno what to say about it. Pup, pup, pup!"

"Wasn't he an evictor? What?" said O'Pollards. "An' didn't the Prime Minister say racently that an eviction was the worst of all outrages? I has his words in me pocket." And drawing a soiled newspaper cutting from his pocket, O'Pollards read as follows:— "Eviction is the exercise of a legal right which may be to the prejudice of your neighbour, which may involve the highest responsibility, nay, even deep moral guilt." And O'Pollards continued: "Ye talks o' th' outrage on Culvert's horse. The Prime Minister also says, referring to that: 'There may be outrages which—all things considered, the persons and the facts—may be less guilty in the sight of God than evictions.'"[2]

"He was a rale bad evictor," said Wegless. "A rale bad man to me own sister-in-law, d'ye see?"

"Case in point. Case in point," said Sawnuch.

"The people will not be oppressed be tyrants, what!" said Patrick O'Pollards. "The Premmeer is on our side, what?"

"If ye were to turn around an' search the whole country for a worse land agent," said Sporeen, "ye couldn't turn around an' projuice wan to me!"

Those who closely study the modes of expression in conversational use in Irish country towns will find a number of mannerisms difficult to explain and impossible to classify. The truth is that for most of the English-speaking Irish folk, English is a medium of communication which only inadequately expresses their feelings. They think in Irish; and when they speak in English they seldom convey their precise meaning at the first attempt. Hence the common saying: "An Irishman must always speak twice."

Even educated Irishmen take liberties with the English language in conversation, and there was scarcely an inhabitant of Gallowglass who had not a species of copyright in certain forms of speech, by the constant use of which he was differentiated from his fellow-townsmen. Thus Mr. O'Pollards, T.C., P.L.G., interspersed all his remarks liberally and unnecessarily with the interrogation "What?"; while Mr. Wegless, the rich publican, relied on the query, "D'ye see?" to emphasise every proposition he advanced; and Mr. Sporeen, the draper, used the expression "Turn around" with a frequency which proved his belief in its efficacy. Mr. Sawnuch the butcher's favourite expression was "Case in point"; while others interlarded their conversation with favourite curses and oaths. All these peculiarities meant nothing more than experiments in English, calculated to give breathing time and to allow the gradual development of thought.

Though Mr. O'Brile was a Town Commissioner and Poor Law Guardian, and "a Gallowglass man, bred, born an' reared," as the local saying had it, it was obvious that the company in which he found himself did not regard him as a desirable companion. Nobody

expressed any sympathy with him upon the burning of his hay, when he alluded to it.

"If you turned around an' tould me you were after bein' burned to ashes yerself last night, amoshta, I'd scarcely turn around an' say I was surprised at it," said Sporeen sarcastically.

"The people oant stand rack-rentin' nor grabbin', what?" continued O'Pollards. "Education is too spread for tyranny! But I guess we must be cautious o' what we says in presence o' the landlords' friends, what?"

"If you allude to me," said Thomas O'Brile, "I'm as much against harshness as you. I can refer ye all to Mrs. Pinkerry for me character. But, whatever rick-burnin' may do, ye ought to draw the line at murder."

"That's too tart, d'ye see, Tom O'Brile!" said Wegless. "D'ye see that now, d'ye see?"

"Take that back!" cried Sawnuch. "'Taint a case in point."

"That's a scurrilious thing to turn around an' say!" cried Sporeen.

The feeling was plainly against O'Brile.

"Here's Tim M'Climber!" cried O'Pollards, as a tall grisly man with grey brown beard strode up, carrying a heavy whip in his hand. Owing to his excessive use of that expression, M'Climber was nicknamed "Let ye be aisy now."

"Any shkyal no,[3] Timothy?" cried O'Dowla.

The newcomer smiled, like one who knew much, but could refrain from imparting his knowledge for any length of time when people wanted information.

"Let ye be aisy now," he began. "Ye all knew Brede O'Grogan?"

"Yes, yes, th' ould woman Culvert evicted in the parish o' Mahernacrow!" said O'Pollards. "Her son is a wild divil, what?"

"Well, let ye be aisy now, she died in 'ospital last week."

"Pup, pup, pup!" cried O'Dowla.

"Whisht!" said O'Pollards. "Go on, Tim! What?"

"Well, let ye be aisy now! Her . . crutch . . an' her

baids . . atop of it . . were laid . . on the body . . whin the police found it . . and . . that's . . as . . true . . as I . . live," said Tim M'Climber, concluding his statement, which was an unmitigated falsehood, with an indrawn sigh and an outblown hiss.

"The parish an' town are disgraced!" said Thomas O'Brile.

"'Tisn't your turn to belie the town, what, or to ram your opinguns down our throats, Mr. O'Brile," cried O'Pollards. "'Twould be more becomin' in you to wait till the parish priest spakes his sentiments a Sunday from th' altar at first mass, what? But you're very independent o' the clergy. That's well known."

"Yerra, lave us turn around an' wait till we hears what the layders o' the people'll turn around an' say upon it at the meetin' to-morrow," said Sporeen. "I'd turn around an' shed me blood for Ireland, if need be, any day, that's wan thing, with any man that walks the flags o' Gallowglass! Be the same token, Tim, I'll be askin' ye for a lind of a britchin[4] this evenin'. I'm takin' a spin over to Brady's Wood to see the site an' me own is out at the saddler's!"

"I loves me country is well is the next man, too, what?" cried O'Pollards. "But in a crissis like this whin th' eyes o' the whole civilised world, an' more if I said it, what, are focussed on the town, the parish priest is the first who should voice the sintiments of the townspeople, what? An', Sporeen, is you're borrin' a britchin from Tim, I'll be after askin' yerself for a loan o' that long ladder you has, as I'm gettin' a few slates put on the roof o' me house."

"'Tis well the laydurs'll be here so soon," said Maurice Sawnuch, the butcher. "I disremember e'er a case in point so apperrapo this twenty year! The laydurs'll knock all th' offal out of it! An', three ga hane shkyal,[5] as ye're all borrin' an' lindin', I'll ask Mr. Sporeen here to give me back me cleaver he took away yesterday an' lind me a measurin' tape."

"All right," said Sporeen bashfully.

"But who's to take the chair? I know the pastor

won't," asked O'Pollards. "Mahernacrow has the whole thing in her hands! What?"

"Lave ye be aisy now," said M'Climber, slapping his gaiter with his whip crop. "I can tell ye 'tis wan o' th' ouldest sthrains in the counthry. The rale M'Coy; bone, breedin' an' action."

"Cloth and colour?" ventured John O'Dowla.

"Yerra, bad cess to you, can't you turn around an' tell us who it is!" said Sporeen. "Don't forget the britchin, Tim!" he added more respectfully.

"What a hurry you're in! Lave ye be aisy," retorted M'Climber, who was skilled in the art of withholding information. "'Tis the MacMade of Madestown."

"Oh, pup, pup!" exclaimed O'Dowla. "They're a family as old as the hills. Didn't any gintlemen present ever hear o' the laws o' the Mades an' Persians?"

"Begor, I often hear th' old saying, but I never knew the maning of it till now," said M'Climber.

"That's a case in point," said Sawnuch. "Mr. O'Dowla, have you such a thing as a tube? There's a heifer o' mine with a turnip or a stone, or something she took up in the grass, stuck in her throat this morning——"

"I have not then. I always borrows me own tube from Swearman, the Vet. The Mades an' Persians! See! That's th' advantage o' mixing with knowledgeable people," said O'Dowla, much elated. "I forgot more than some people learned, present company excepted. Pup, pup, pup!"

"Th' only law I'd take from MacMade would be a law for drinking without gettin' drunk, what?" said O'Pollards. "He should be an ithority on that if we're to go be noses! What? Sporeen, don't forget I'm after askin' you for that ladder!"

"That's no fault in a man, d'ye see?" said Wegless, the publican. "MacMade is a dasent man, d'ye see that now?"

Thomas O'Brile's presence was studiously ignored; but he remained with the group of shopkeepers, as if in assertion of a right.

"As I often say, He, he, he," said John O'Dowla,

when silence was restored, "the only way to settle the land question is to shoot all the landlords in Ireland in a single night, an' see, exclude lawyers from Parliament! Pup, pup, pup. My God Almighty!"

Having thus righted himself with public opinion, John O'Dowla returned to his shop door, where he aired himself for several seconds, until Main, the servant girl, came to say that his breakfast was waiting for him. On hearing this very natural message John seemed startled and looked suspiciously at the girl; but, nevertheless, obeyed the summons.

The catastrophe was so unprecedented in Gallowglass that the parts of speech most in demand at the breakfast table were interjections; and the only nouns used were the names of the Holy Trinity, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the angels and saints, always in the vocative case.

"Holy Saint Joseph, patron of a happy death!" said Mrs. O'Dowla.

"Pup, pup, pup! Glory be to God Almighty!"

"I was going to say, 'The Lord have mercy on him,' till I bethought meself he was a Protestant," sighed Mrs. O'Dowla. "What do the men think of it, John?"

"Pup, pup, pup! Tw-oh! Tw-oh! Tw-oh!"

"How callous them Protestants are! I didn't see wan belonging to him after the hearse! Where's that boy from his breakfast!" And Mrs. O'Dowla went out to call her son to breakfast, as a vent to her parental feelings. But Hugh made no response, as he lay face downwards on the tossed bedclothes.

"Can it be that Hugh has a devil in him?" she said as she resumed her breakfast, her bosom heaving from the exertion of the journey into the return-building.

"If he has, I'll soon knock it out of him," cried her husband, standing on tiptoe to get down an ash-plant from a shelf over the door, and leaving the room precipitately.

"Is that the respect you have for your mother, me college-reared puppy!" he cried, bursting into Hugh's bedroom.

But Hugh did not stir at his father's approach; at which, being contrary to all precedent, John O'Dowla was taken aback. He struck his son smartly across the shoulders with the light end of the plant, and Hugh arose into a sitting posture. His father anticipated being told to go to some unmentionable destination, in accordance with the customary and approved filial procedure of the upstart young generation in Gallowglass.

But Hugh O'Dowla only groaned and said, "Father, I'm sick. Let me rest!"

Such language was utterly unexpected, for John O'Dowla had never been addressed as "father" by his son, who, having abandoned the use of the word "papa" several years previously as being babyish, had never adopted a substitute. Ignatius O'Dowla addressed his father as "sir"; but that portentous step was taken by the elder son on his own initiative and was not binding on Hugh, who used no title of respect heretofore in speaking to his father.

"He must have something up with him!" was the conclusion to which John O'Dowla came upon the evidence.

"What's the matter?" he said aloud. "Don't you know we're threshing at Garekiln to-day, you sir? You should be out there at nine o'clock. Go down to Porterson's on yer way an' borra fifty corn sacks!"

Hugh started as he heard the words "nine o'clock," the hour of his appointment with Molly Carew, and said, "I'll go out to Garekiln at once."

"Pup, pup, pup!" exclaimed John O'Dowla, and he waddled back to the parlour. As he restored the ash-plant to its place he looked fiercely towards his wife and said, "Make a strong dose o' salts an' senna for that fella after breakfast, maw shay dhu hulla." [5]

Having given his order, John O'Dowla blushed, the black scowl of awful mystery melted away from his features, and he endeavoured to smile; for he had become conscious of his daughter's presence. One of his favourite maxims, when the children were young, had been, "Laugh always when with ladies, no matter if you have nothing to laugh at; laugh even when you

say '*What is it?*'" But since Julia began to be grown up, he often found himself violating the maxim in spite of his best intentions; for he regarded his daughter as a lady, but did not so classify his wife.

"Papa, please don't mention salts an' senna when we're at breakfast!" said Julia pertly, as she sat waiting to be helped.

John groaned in spirit. This was ground on which he could not fight. He knew there was such a science as politeness, but did not believe it could be practised always, as Julia seemed to expect. If he were bound to do so, he felt that life would not be worth living.

"Oh! Julia," was all he said. It was what he always said, in fact, to his daughter. "Have you cream for Julia, mother?" he added, as he broke his large green duck egg and shook pepper into it from the castor.

"Hugh must have a devil in him!" said Mrs. O'Dowla, ignoring his question, "an' me uncle the priest often told me there was a riot, or whatever they calls it in theyology, in the church, for exorcisin' or banishin' devils out o' the people. He read it wanst over a cattle-daler just gettin over the horrors of drink, an' it cured him."

"I could believe in exercising, if I could believe in anything, for I know the devil he has; 'tis laziness!" said John, laughing as he said it, for fear Julia would take it seriously and rebuke him again.

"What's the general opinion about this business?" said Mrs. O'Dowla, with a sigh.

"'Tis what I always said. If they're to be kilt, lave um be kilt. Shooting and missing, or killing the coachman and missing the master, is what the people don't like. Everywan knows my opinion," he said, putting another heavy shake of pepper in his duck egg; then remembering Julia, he added, "Pup, pup, pup, pup-poo!"

"Don't speak about this horrid murder at breakfast, mamma!" said Julia.

"Yerra, do you think we're med o' stone, or that we're dancin' masters and can be always mindin' our P's and Q's?" said Mrs. O'Dowla brusquely.

"Oh! Julia," exclaimed John, looking at her as if he had just discovered her presence. Then to his wife, "I say, stop it, woman! Lay me fill meself for the day's work in peace!"

"Don't say, 'fill meself,' papa; it is awfully rude," simpered Julia. John stopped and looked at a spoonful of egg for a minute, and then he resorted to the only expedient known to him of rendering existence endurable in his daughter's presence—an expedient he had resorted to a thousand times since Julia first went to a convent boarding school. He spoke to his wife in Irish.

"Thanks be to God, there's no manners in Irish," said John.

Julia did not know a word of the language, but she felt quite at home amidst the volleys of gutturals that were being shot off right and left of her by her parents, recognising such oft-recurring expressions as "Nobbeen bowera!"[6] "Neenawhoona!"[7] and "Dawreerah!"[8]

"I wish to God I could ate in Irish!" said John, to his wife. "I was always against that convent school."

Nowhere is learning more respected than in Ireland; and the universal desire of Catholic Irish parents to educate their children in such a manner as to fit them for a superior station in life frequently proves a rock on which the domestic happiness of many a family is wrecked. "A little learning is a dangerous thing"—and the semi-educated children often come to despise their parents.

"Is it like meself you'd have her?" asked Mrs. O'Dowla.

"Well no, surely," said John. "I always thought a doctor or an attorney might take up with her."

"Just so," said his wife. "She's born to claneliness an' must be brought up as such in due course."

"What is politeness, or gentility, or manners?" said John O'Dowla, speaking in Irish. "I have been studying it, an' I finds it manes thinkin' of what everywan but yerself wants, and givin' it to 'em, if you can at all get it for 'em, givin' it to 'em, mind y'; an' never look-

ing out for yourself, but trustin' others to do it for yuh! Then as to talk, it manes never to say what you like yourself, or what you want to say, but something that somewan else wants you to say or that they'd like to hear. And as for ating, begor you'd starve yourself if you followed the strict rules o' manners, or else you'd have to ate in private by yourself afterwards. Manners is a thing that money-making in Gallowglass could never consort with. I can pass it off well enough to a customer in the shop; but 'tis inhuman to expect a man to keep up even shop manners, when he comes in to his males or to set down for the night."

Breakfast over, John O'Dowla returned to the street, where gossip still continued rife.

Handy, being a married man whose wife could not be accommodated in barracks, was on his way to breakfast; and, as the Gallowglass people were as yet on friendly terms with the police, O'Dowla bade him "Good morning," adding the sententious remark that "things had taken an awful turn in Gallowglass."

"Seer, Mester O'Dulla," said the North of Ireland man, in a whisper, sending forth his words in almost unintelligible bundles, "af Mester Culvert pros'cuted 'em for kill'n' 's horse till th' utmost rig'r o' th' law, he'd b' a levvin man till day. The' took 't may be he showed the white feather." There was not another man in Gallowglass except this blunt Ulster Presbyterian who would have dared to hint that the dead agent had been deficient in courage.

Ruminating over the policeman's sage opinion, John waddled back again to the knot of men in the street, and stood beside them, not hearing very well what they said, as he ejaculated "Pup, pup, pup!" and kept balancing himself on his heels and toes alternately.

"Culvert owes me near £20!" exclaimed Sawnuch, the butcher. "I'll furnish it to-day! Case in point! Case in point, gintlemin! Oh, there's Swearman! I'll ask him for the tube!"

"Be the same tokens he owes me father near £40!" cried Sporeen. "I'll turn around an' be in is soon is ye,

Mr. Sawnuch. You needn't be thinkin' I'm forgettin' yer cleaver!"

"As ye're all mindin' number wan," said O'Pollards, "I can't afford to be dillterry, what? He owes me £10 odd. I'll sind over the boy now for that ladder, Sporeen!"

"He owes me a few pounds too," said John O'Dowla, "an' I has to think o' me wife and family as well as the rest o' ye. Pup, pup, pup! Glory be to God for all His gifts and graces! I s'pose none o' ye, gentlemen, has any corn sacks to spare?"

"I'm owed £100 by him," said Thomas O'Brile quietly, "an' if I was never to be paid, I'll not furnish it until a week or a fortnight after he's buried, anyway."

This statement was received with a roar of disapproval.

"You're a landlords' friend, what?" said O'Pollards.

"I'll tell ye what, I'll give ye a case in point," said Sawnuch, opening his enormous mouth to its fullest extent, "a mayner house I never wint into than the same Culvert's. Many an' many the time I wint there about cattle, an' nobody ever as much as asked me if I had a mouth on me. 'Tisn't that I cared, but still for all——"

"I can turn around an' say here's the same," said Sporeen. "I never seen a sight o' the decanter there is often is I called there for an account, or one thing or other. I could turn about an' swear that."

"'Tis a mane, narrow-hearted man, d'ye see," said Mr. Wegless, the publican, "that wouldn't offer a body a glass of grog, d'ye see, af they didn't want it inself. D'ye see that now?"

"Here's the body!" said O'Pollards.

"Lave ye be aisy! 'Tis my hearse," said M'Climber. "I was going to drive it meself, but me stomach is aisily upsot of late, an' I sint Donal' Rue out to 'em."

"That's not your hearse!" said a man called Cracked Daly. "Don't I see Mullanny's name on it?"

"Be aisy now!" said M'Climber. "I borrid it for th' occasion. 'Tis I has the contract o' the funelar!"

"You were right not to turn around an' upset yerself,"

said Sporeen. "See here, Daly, turn around now an' hould yer tongue or you'll get yourself arrested!"

"Me arrested!" cried Cracked Daly.

Meanwhile an open bier with a number of rugs laid over it, came up the street, bearing the body of a just man whose conscientiousness bordered upon what is called cowardice, but who had done his best in a difficult situation, a man who had left his home in perfect health and spirits yesterday, kissing his wife and children as was his wont, foreseeing not at all that he was doomed to meet a violent death.

And now, while Gallowglass cackled and its dogs barked at the passing hearse, his stricken widow and daughters, speechless and tearless, were stupefied with grief, in the well-ordered household which they had set up three years ago with great expectations.

Thomas O'Brile took off his hat as the hearse passed, and, recognising William Carew amongst a group of the estate labourers who followed the bier, he stepped into the roadway and whispered in the herd's ear: "If I can be of any use to the mistress you may let me know. She'll get little sympathy in the town o' Gallowglass to-day."

"Watch at the grabber turnin' around an' throwin' in his lot with the landlord!" said Sporeen, pointing to Thomas O'Brile.

"What's this? What's this?" cried O'Pollards, who, being a tall man, could see over the heads of the crowd.

Hugh O'Dowla had come out of doors, having breakfasted, and now stood pale and nervous on the flags, suffering all the pangs of a guilty conscience in addition to extreme physical weariness; and, overwhelmed by the events going on around him, feeling as if he were being carried down to sea in a torrent's flood.

"What's this? Can I blee me eyes, what?" cried O'Pollards.

Hugh tried to look over the heads of the crowd. The buzz of murmur and inquiry grew louder and more confused. Loud argument, loud assertion and louder contradiction, all unintelligible to him, surged in on his

ears. He jumped on a barrel which stood outside the shop window, and, to his horror, beheld Edward O'Brile, with steel handcuffs on his wrists, walking with downcast face between the two armed policemen, Drydoss and Webbilly. Edward's eyes rested on Hugh for a second, and then he disappeared inside the barrack door. In that second Hugh's heart seemed to stop, and he fell off the barrel upon the flags. He staggered to his feet again and rushed upstairs to his room, where he threw himself face downwards on the bed.

Thomas O'Brile forced his way into the barrack against all opposition, and confronted his handcuffed son in the day-room. He was not an emotional man; but tears stood in his eyes.

"What's the meaning of this, me boy?" he said huskily. Edward O'Brile was silent; but he did not cower before his father's penetrating glance. Having learned the nature of the charge against his son, Thomas O'Brile forced himself to smile, as an evidence of his incredulity.

"Aren't y' innocent?" he said, addressing his son.

"I am, father," said Edward, looking fearlessly into his parent's small bright eyes.

"Where's the Sub-Inspector?" said Mr. O'Brile, turning to Drydoss. "My son must be released this instant! I can go bail for ten thousand pounds for him."

Mr O'Brile's words came quickly and forcibly, but his voice was broken. The acting-sergeant felt for him, and said in a sympathetic tone: "Useless at present, Mr. O'Brile! The S.I. will be here in half-an-hour's time, and then you can talk about bail."

"Send my mother to me, father!" said Edward.

Mr. O'Brile looked again into his son's face, and, taking him by the hand, said: "Never fear, Eddie. She'll be with you in a minute."

As the day-room was required for breakfast and for consultation purposes, Edward was asked to go into the lock-up, where he sat on the wooden bench a prey to conflicting emotions. The handcuffs had been removed, but his bruised wrists still pained. He awaited the

coming of his mother with intense anxiety. She was a bright, handsome woman of gentle birth, who, at seventeen, owing to the poverty of her family, had married Thomas O'Brile, then a struggling young shopkeeper, who was nicknamed Tom the Fool by his uncharitable rivals. But there was nothing exceptional in that, for every man, woman, and child in Gallowglass had a nickname in which not only personal peculiarities but even physical infirmities and ancestral misdeeds were perpetuated in the public memory, to the perennial annoyance of the nicknamed.

Thomas O'Brile was not a fool. He loved his gentle, sensible wife, who developed great strength of character with advancing years, and, at fifty, he had grown to be the richest shopkeeper in Gallowglass. He speculated in every branch of local enterprise and all that he had undertaken had turned out well. His wife took care of his money, and her signature, "Kate O'Brile for Thomas O'Brile," was often appended to cheques for four figures. Mrs. O'Brile was not popular with the other shopkeepers' wives, chiefly because she was better bred than they were; but her unpopularity was also due to her habits of self-reliance, inherited largely from her mother, who had been a Protestant, and to the fact that she did not frequent the chapel more than was necessary to fulfil the commandments of the Church. In cases where Mrs. O'Dowla, Mrs. Sawnuch, and Mrs. Wegless, for instance, would seek advice in the confessional and pay for having masses celebrated for their intentions, Mrs. O'Brile would depend upon her own strength of mind fortified by a more than superficial knowledge of the best lessons inculcated by the life of Christ.

This morning Mrs. O'Brile encountered the greatest sorrow of her life with a brave, unflinching heart. Without waiting for bonnet or cloak, but just as she was, in her tight-fitting black poplin dress which set off her plump, active figure to much advantage, her hair divided in the centre after the fashion of Queen Victoria and the Empress Eugenie, wearing a large cameo brooch containing her husband's miniature, through the pin of which her long treble gold watch chain passed before it fell to

the watch-pocket near her waist, Mrs. O'Brile rushed out of doors and ran down the Main Street.

"There's Tom Brile's wife!" "There's Mrs. Brile!" "She'll kill herself!" "Where's Tom the Fool?" "God help her this morning!" Thus the Gallowglass rabbits at the shop doors, as she swept past them.

Catching up her skirt and showing her white stockings and petticoat, she ran, as if her life depended on it, until she reached the barrack door. Past Constable Handy at the threshold and along the hall which she had never before entered, the eager mother made her way.

"Mother! Mother!" her son cried, for even within the barred iron door of the lock-up he recognised her light firm footsteps in the flagged hall.

She heard him and went straight to the iron door, which she pounded with her clenched fists, exclaiming: "Eddie, me boy! I'm here. Let me in! Let me in! Let me in to my son! Open the door this minute for me, or I'll break it in!"

Constable Handy, who was not used to witnessing scenes of sober family affection in the lock-up, smothered a sob as he unlocked the door. Mrs. O'Brile flew to her son and clasped him to her heart, and in that position both cried awhile.

"Shut the door, Handy!" said Mrs. O'Brile. "Go out, I want to speak to my boy alone!" The policeman obeyed her, for she was well known in Gallowglass; where as yet the friendliest relations existed between the shop-keepers and the police.

"Kneel down, Eddie," she said, when the door was shut. He did so, and she knelt beside him and prayed to God to guide them before taking counsel. A decade of the rosary was said, and both felt soothed by the old familiar sounds, which each had learned at a time beyond the verge of memory.

Then Mrs. O'Brile arose, and, sitting on the prison bench beside her son, put back her boy's curly hair from his forehead, and, looking into his eyes as if she would read his inmost thoughts, she said deliberately: "Now, Eddie, tell me all."

And her son told her the whole truth, beginning with his impersonation of Hugh O'Dowla and ending with his arrest at Brady's Wood.

When he had done, she said: "I believe you, Eddie, The Chief of Police must be told and you must be released at once. You did wrong in helping Hugh O'Dowla to do an improper act and you did worse in deceiving his father, but you have got punished for it, and it may be a lesson to you. I hope it will."

"The police must not be told until I have seen Hugh O'Dowla," said Edward. "If it comes out that Hugh was in the wood all night with Molly Carew, his character will be ruined."

"But if it is permitted to be said that you went out to meet that abominable girl there at that hour, your character will be equally ruined!" said the mother.

"No, mother," replied Edward. "For you and my father would believe in me, and, with you on my side, what would I care for the censure of the world? Besides, you know, Hugh has prospects from old Miss Penser."

Mrs. O'Brile's bosom swelled with parental pride at being made the recipient of her son's entire confidence, especially when she contrasted her happiness with the total absence of mutual trust existing in the O'Dowla household. For a moment she allowed herself to take her boy's view of the question, and was prepared to make any reasonable sacrifice in order to save a neighbour from grievous trouble.

"We must consult your father," she said, rising. "I hear it said that Father O'Darrell is most anxious that Hugh O'Dowla should become a priest. That, of course, is impossible now!"

Mrs. O'Brile faced the criticism of the street with confidence as she walked proudly out of the barrack to prepare the best breakfast in her larder for the son she loved better than her life. Lightly and quickly she passed up the Main Street, her lips compressed, her eyes downcast, her conscience at ease, assured of her son's innocence.

When she reached home she called her husband into

THOMAS O'BRILE AND MRS. O'BRILE

"Why should he bear the punishment of another's crime?" said Thomas O'Brile incredulously.

"That's what I'm coming to," replied his wife. "If Christ bore all our burdens for us, though entirely innocent Himself, is not that an example which we would do well to follow occasionally?"—p. 157.

the parlour; and, as he sat down before her, ready to hear what she had to say, her face was overcast with thought. For a minute she remained silent; and then, beginning almost in a whisper, she told him the circumstances which led up to Edward's discovery in Molly Carew's company at Brady's Wood.

"Well, then," said Thomas O'Brile quickly, "Eddie must be released at once, and the police can go to Hugh O'Dowla for any information they require."

"There is more than that to be considered," said his wife. "My mother, as you know, was a Protestant till she married my father, and she never forgot what she learned in her youth. I often heard her say that we Catholics know scarcely anything about Christ; for if we did, she used to say, we would never be cast into such despair by our troubles. I know something of Christ, thanks to her——"

"Well?" said her husband in surprise; "what has that to say to it?"

"It has a great deal to say to it," said Mrs. O'Brile. "It is a queer thing that Christians, as we Catholics are, never practise what Christ preached. Though I never speak of such things, still I'm not ashamed to say that on more than one occasion I have gone to Him in my trouble and always found consolation."

"Sure we all say our prayers an' go to confession an' communion," began her husband. "There's nothing wonderful in that."

"What I mean is quite different, Tom," said Mrs. O'Brile, shaking her head. "Eddie won't disclose why he went to the Wood, and he is prepared to bear the false construction which will be put on his acts rather than incriminate Hugh O'Dowla."

"Why should he bear the punishment of another's sin?" said Thomas O'Brile incredulously.

"That's what I'm coming to," replied his wife. "If Christ bore all our burdens for us, though entirely innocent Himself, is not that an example which we would do well to follow occasionally?"

Thomas O'Brile blushed and moved uneasily in his seat.

"I think we should follow it," continued Mrs. O'Brile. "If the truth about Hugh O'Dowla is disclosed, the boy will be ruined, because he is guilty. But Eddie is innocent and therefore he is safe. I often heard my mother say, 'It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.' So I think we should be prepared to let our son bear this yoke he has placed upon himself. In doing so, he and we will be bearing Hugh O'Dowla's burden, not only for Hugh's sake, but for Ignatius's sake, who is one of the most deserving young men in the world."

Thomas O'Brile smiled with pleasure and said, "So be it, Kate."

"Let the gossips say what they like," said Mrs. O'Brile, closing the conversation; "I'm not ambitious for the praises o' Gallowglass. Woe, indeed, unto you when all Gallowglass speaks well of you!"

"Without going so far as rilligion at all, sure, let us do it out o' good nature," said her husband, and he walked away, for, like most Catholics, he was unwilling to admit that he could rise to the level of Christian heroism in the ordinary affairs of daily life.

[1] It may be so.
[2] Extract from a speech of the Liberal leader at the time.
[3] News.
[4] The breeching. Portion of a horse's harness.
[5] Each one to his own tale.
[6] If you please.
[7] Don't bother me.
[8] Wonderful.
[9] Are you serious?

CHAPTER XIII

"O weary life! O weary death!
O spirit and heart made desolate!
O damned vacillating state!"
—TENNYSON.

HUGH O'DOWLA lay grovelling on his bed, his mind distracted by remorse and terror. Many days of his life had been thus wasted in secret brooding and self-analysis, to the detriment of his character. He had lost the habit of confiding in his parents, and had not the courage to disclose his real motives and acts to any one. He was so morbidly self-conscious in his moments of serious reflection that he looked on himself as a most unnatural criminal. Confession, a sacrament to which he had frequent recourse, left his innermost mind undiscovered; and, though absolution seemed to give him relief, raising his spirits and momentarily banishing care, there was no resultant strengthening of character, and he continually relapsed into the sins which so preyed upon his mind. Mrs. O'Dowla, pious and portly woman, constantly engaged in the pressing practical business of accumulating money for this world wherewith to purchase and pile up graces and indulgences for use in the next world, was utterly unresponsive to the varying moods of her impressionable son. Hugh O'Dowla looked up to Roland Glenpower in many respects, and he knew of no one else from whom to request advice about his difficulties. But it was impossible to consult Roland seriously; for whenever the Master of Hounds came to town, he spoke at such length about having "a divvle of a lot to do," that he rarely had any time left in which to do it; and he smothered all sober conversation by his avalanche of talk and peculiar jocosity—his "ratapang" and "slapdash," to use his own words.

Hugh O'Dowla's conscience was now wriggling and paining as acutely as an exposed nerve. It pointed out the path of duty, but it also disclosed and analysed the risks involved in following it. Accustomed, as Hugh had been from his infancy, to avoid sin, not because it was essentially wrong but because its commission involved everlasting torture in the next world, the young man was not prepared to incur bodily risks on earth in the performance of unpleasant duties. Pain and risk were as much to be shunned in this life as in the next.

Mr. Culvert was cruelly murdered. Hugh O'Dowla knew his murderers, and his conscience told him that it was his duty to reveal their identity to the authorities. But the consequences of so doing loomed up like some spectral apparition seen through the mists of a diseased mind. There is a higher power than Government in this world. It is the power represented by the priest. If it was wrong to kill Mr. Culvert, would it not be wrong to kill Donoghue Spilltan, Moss Scarlant, and Dick Quisk ? If Hugh turned Queen's evidence, would it not be consigning them to the gallows ? How could he take such a responsibility on himself without consulting the priest who was his conscience-keeper ?

If he consulted his mother he felt sure she would advise him to go straight off to confession, and would wash her hands of all further responsibility in the matter. He could hear her saying : "Tell me no more about it, boy ! Go straight up to the chapel an' make a full confession, an' be said be the priest ! "

He knew it was his duty to procure the release of his friend Edward O'Brile, who must have got himself arrested through his eagerness to ascertain whether he (Hugh) was in danger in Brady's Wood. But if he presented himself at the barrack he would be arousing the perilous curiosity of the police. It is not an easy task to fathom the helpless cowardice of this youth of nineteen, who should have been a brave man !

Then it occurred to him that he owed a paramount duty to Molly Carew. He had promised to meet her at Garekiln at nine o'clock, and it was on the faith of that

pledge that she had consented to his parting from her. Molly would have no reproaches for him. There was no unpleasantness involved in the performance of his supposed duty to her. His spirits began to revive.

Was it not possible to end all his trouble by going to confession to Father Lawnavawla on his return from Garekiln in the evening? It was the first Saturday of the month, and numbers of people would be going to confession. In the hurry Father Lawnavawla would not, perhaps, allow him to go into details, but would give him absolution, as he had so often done before, without asking for any particulars as to names, places, or dates.

Yes, he would seek out Molly in the Well Field, though it was long past nine o'clock; he would do his duty by superintending the threshing at Garekiln, and in the evening he would go to confession. After all, was he supposed to know why Edward O'Brile had been arrested, or to endanger his own safety by inquiring, when such immeasurable danger for himself was involved.

He left his bedroom and went down into the shop. John O'Dowla was on the flags. Julia was closeted in her room. Mrs. O'Dowla was busy controlling the clerks and smiling welcomes on the customers. Hugh went into the street; and, mingling with the crowd, overheard various conflicting versions of Molly Carew's encounter with the police and of Edward O'Brile's arrest when in her company at Brady's Wood. It was no longer open to doubt that Edward O'Brile had run into danger in his anxiety about Hugh O'Dowla's safety. But then the further question arose: How did Molly Carew get back so soon to the scene of the murder from which she and Hugh had fled so precipitately? When Hugh parted from her she was at least two miles from Brady's Wood. Why had she gone back?

"That daughter o' Carew's is a rivil, what?" said O'Pollards. "They fired twinty ball cartridges at her and she wouldn't stop."

"If I was dyin' this blessed minute I'd turn around an' say 'twas a shame for the bobbies to turn around an' take aim at the girl," said Sporeen.

"What else did they give 'em the buckshot[1] for? Case in point, case in point," said Maurice Sawnuch.

Hugh's brain took fire at these words, and returning to the house he wended his way straight to the stable. Molly's image once more filled his mind and inflamed his imagination. Every other duty was forgotten in his excitement. He endeavoured to convince himself that she had the first call on his services. She might be in danger, wounded, perhaps dying! Acting on the impulse of the moment, he saddled his mare; but, as he mounted her at the back gate, he missed the resonant baying of Neptune, who had never failed to give him a send-off when setting out on such journeys. When would the dog's disappearance be discovered? Ignatius might notice it to-morrow. Bugler would assuredly miss the dog when he came to perform his irregular labours in the stable, but by that time Hugh—would have gone to confession!

The good mare, given a free head, galloped over the three miles between Gallowglass and Garekiln, and in less than a quarter of an hour Hugh was dismounting under the shadow of the chestnut in Garekiln farmyard, having forgotten his father's injunction about the corn sacks. He sent the mare rushing into her stall, and, without waiting to tie her up, put the hasp on the stable door. In a minute he was in the Well Field and running towards the fort. Clearing the sunken fence at a bound, he stood in the shadow of the firs. Molly was not there. He called her by name, but she did not answer. A feeling of despair came over him, engendered by the consciousness of his own guilt. He yearned for the companionship of some sympathetic person, and it now seemed to him as if it was Molly's absence and his solicitude for her safety which chilled his bowels and paralysed his lower brain. He must find her, and would never know peace until he again laid eyes upon her. Looking across the field his gaze fell on the haggard, and, in the midst of the ricks, he discerned the smoke-funnel and flywheel of the engine. The sight reminded him that it was threshing day. Instinctively at first, but actuated subsequently by the hope of finding Molly, he walked towards the haggard.

As he drew nearer he could distinguish the great belt which worked the thresher, then the thresher itself, on the feeding-board of which Bill Darry, the feeder, was dropping in the sheaves by twos and threes, ears foremost. Round the feeder stood the three sheaf-cutters, cutting the binders with keen-edged knives which they tossed at intervals behind them to be sharpened, their figures standing clear against the sky, as they stood or stooped on the threshing-board. Many a time had he thus looked at Molly working on the feeding-board, and to-day he missed her familiar figure. There was still the chance left that she, having given up all hope of his coming, might have gone to join the company at the threshing.

On entering the haggard, the first man he saw was Donoghue Spilltan, pitching sheaves to the cutters, with Bill Arnill as his comrade. Dick Quisk and Moss Scarlant were also at work there, piking the straw away from the tossers as it came out of the thresher. Hugh experienced a sickening sensation when he beheld the three young men thus brazening it out amongst their neighbours, as if they had never left their beds last night. He walked up to where the engine-driver was standing on a heap of cinders by the fire-box. The steam was hissing from the safety-valve and from every cock and joint of the engine. The driving-wheel revolved so quickly that not one of its spokes were visible, and the iron rim looked like a circle unsupported in mid-air.

"Is that yourself, Master Hugh?" said the engine-driver, who, in partnership with his brother, the feeder, owned the machine.

Hugh's lips twinged, as he replied by another question: "How are you getting on, Tom?"

The driver's reply was yelled back in tones calculated to carry many hundred yards: "How're we gettin' on, is it? Splindid, splindid, the corn is as dry as snuff. I never seen a better saved crop this many year, not to say this miserable year at all, but any year these last twinty years!"

"And the yield?" asked Hugh mechanically, and hoping fervently that the engine-driver would not allude to the murder of Mr. Culvert.

"Fair, fair enough considerin'. 'Twill bring about twelve barrels to th' acre an' 'tis maltin' barley that'll weigh over fifty pounds to the bushel!" screamed the driver, who, having raked out the red cinders from his fire-box, was shovelling in fresh coal, which sent a cloud of black smoke up the funnel. Then Tom Darry took the bung out of a puncheon, which stood heeled-in before an open tank propped erect with large stones, from which the engine sucked up her water supply through an india-rubber tube. Hugh stared, as if mesmerised, while the water poured from the full puncheon; and, as its level rose till it touched the brim, so the youth's troubles seemed to rise within him till his cup of sorrow was full to overflowing.

The tank being brimful the driver hammered the bung into the puncheon with a paving stone. "There y' are, me hearty!" exclaimed Tom Darry. Then turning to Hugh, he yelled: "I suppose they's a sight o' talk an' news in Gallowglass street this day! I didn't hear much meself, but I'll have it a Sunday after mass; or mebbe to-night if I roves into Gallowglass; I'm sure the P.P. will come out strong about it a' first mass. Till I hears him, I dunno what to say rightly about it meself."

"Perhaps the C.C. would say mass!" suggested Hugh inanely.

"Well, dearly is I likes me C.C., that's Father Lawna-vawla, I likes me P.P. bether, he brings it all out so soft an' aisy, he's me darlin'! I doesn't know a haporth about how it occurred nor nauthin'; nor do wan single man in the haggard," said Darry, in tones which insinuated that he expected some news from Hugh as one just come from that centre of all intelligence and information—the Main Street of Gallowglass.

"It was a horrible business, I think!" said Hugh, determined to give no information to Darry, but feeling as if the utterance of the words would almost choke him.

"Ah! me dear young master," said Tom Darry, "is you'll know wan day, they's two sides t' every question; an' wan story is good till th' other is toult. Mr. Culvert was a bad member in many ways and did many a black

thing in his day, though I'd pray for the repose of his soul if I could, but I can't, is he was a Protestant."

"Murder is never justified, Tom!" said Hugh, feeling a surge of indignation rush through him as he looked across the haggard at Quisk, Scarlant, and Spilltan, his better self awaking momentarily.

"Well, no, I admit," said the driver, "but still an' all, d'ye see, still an' all, nauthin' happens oany be the will o' God, an' meself for wan 'll wait till I hears what the pasthur says of it, before I has any 'pingun about the case. 'Tis the safest." And to end the matter Darry burst forth into song:

"Aa-an is I ro-oved ow-at of a summur's evenin'
Whin the winterr's snow lid upon the grround!
An' the thirty-fust av August in the middle av July!"

By accident or design the driver had looked towards Donoghue Spilltan who stood some paces off, throwing sheaves from a rick of corn to the threshing board, and Donoghue had blushed.

But recovering himself and feeling called on to say something, Spilltan roared out to Tom Darry: "Every wan says Culver kilt Bride O'Grogan, an' how many did bloody skuts like him drive out o' house an' home to 'Merika these twenty years?"

"True for ye, ma bouchil, he was a bad man," cried Dick Quisk, and, sinking his pike into the fresh straw which the thresher kept belching forth in flakes from the tossers, he sang aloud the following verse, pitching his voice so high that he was heard all over the haggard—

"Black Billy Grimes of Latnamard, he racked us long and sore—
God rest the faithful hearts he broke!—we'll never see them more!
But I'll go bail he'll break no more, while Truagh has gallows-trees,
For why?—he met, one lonely night, the fearless Rapparees!
They never sin no more, my boys, who cross the Rapparees!"[2]

"I say that 'twas wrong to kill the man though fwatever he was!" cried Moss Scarlant, who was stationed with Quisk at the tossers.

"I says so meself!" roared Donoghue, taking his cue from his leader.

"'Twas a shame to kill him anyway!" bellowed Dick Quisk, wishing not to be outdone. "Bad as he was he had a right to live!"

"Begor, I'd know," cried Bill Arnill, one of the soberest and most sensible men in the haggard, "af he kilt anybody belongin' to me, I'd kill him meself, without a doubt! There's for ye now!"

"You wouldn't kill a flay!" cried Donoghue contemptuously, at which all within hearing laughed; for Arnill was a very industrious, home-keeping man, and, therefore, a butt for the railers.

"Wouldn't I though?" cried Arnill, throwing down his pike. "I would an' kill a dozen like you." As he spoke, he sprang at Donoghue and knocked him on the rick, clutching him by the throat with one hand, and beating the soft parts of his legs with the other, as he kicked them upwards.

Donoghue screamed: "Thonnamondeel!" he swore, "lay me go!"

"What'll I do with him?" roared Arnill. "Will I lave him the right any longer to be called a man?"

"On with the work! Up here with the shayves!" roared Bill Darry the feeder. "The machine is running impty. Lave off yeer kimmeens!"

At the sound of the feeder's voice Arnill let Donoghue go, and commenced piking up the sheaves with great velocity, not ceasing until he had accumulated a pile of them on the board beside the cutters; but Donoghue stood looking on sulkily.

"Donoghue, attend to your work!" said Hugh, who had with difficulty restrained his passion at hearing the hypocritical speeches of the three young men. But Donoghue stopped deliberately and, folding his arms, leaned on the handle of his pike, staring impudently at Hugh, who returned his glance unflinchingly, fortified by his knowledge of the boy's guilt.

Donoghue blushed and muttered something disrespectful; but his dry lips would not meet, and he turned away

as if to resume work. But, having moistened his lips, he changed his mind, and, standing idle again, he sank the prongs of his pike into a sheaf and left it there quivering.

"I wonder whey's Molly Carew to-day?" he said sarcastically, looking at Hugh, but addressing Quisk and Scarlant, who had stopped to listen; and who, being unpaid helpers and farmers' sons, were outside the scope of Hugh's authority.

"Omossa we misses Moll this day!" said one of the sheaf-cutters from the board, catching up Donoghue's words. "She was a good warran'!"

"She was is good is two of ye faggits!" roared the feeder.

"She'll never cut another shave," cried Donoghue. "She's a good heifer gone wrong! Ask Master Kew if she ain't?"

A general roar of laughter followed this missile of Donoghue's, for which he had no foundation, however, beyond the incident in the stable the day before. The news of Edward O'Brile's arrest and of Molly's escape from the police had not yet reached the haggard.

"Shut yer gob.[3] How badly off she is indeed!" cried Mrs. Arnill. "She's wan age to my Liz."

"'Tis a shame for yer father's son, Master Kew, to put a hand on is honest a man's daughter as ever lived," yelled Bill Darry in foghorn tones from the top of the machine.

"You'll have to marry her now is you spoilt her!" screamed Donoghue, who, at an earlier period of the day, had been diverting the haggard with the story of William Carew and his new whip, seeking tidings of Molly while she lay hidden in the stable beside him. "Her mother was a farmer's daughter, an' that's good enough."

"Pill-a-mil-loo!" roared Mrs. Arnill. "I wouldn't ike to have Moll for me misthuss at all, at all!"

"You'll be cuttin' shaves for her next year be all accounts!" said Donoghue, who had resumed his pitching, now that he found a means of wounding Hugh more effectively than by his own idleness.

Hugh's temper was never in subjection; and recent events had tended to make him more than usually nervous and excitable.

"He's like his father," said Mrs. Arnill, watching the swelling veins on Hugh's forehead as the expression of his face grew darker, when the conviction forced itself on his mind that Donoghue was deliberately insulting him, and making him a butt for the haggard.

"Put down your pike and leave the haggard, Donoghue!" said Hugh, ascending the rick and standing beside the servant-boy.

Donoghue's face grew red and he muttered something inaudible, but, instead of leaving, he began to pitch the sheaves faster than ever. Hugh was trembling with passion, his susceptibility having been keenly wounded by the jesting allusions to Molly, as his prospective wife and mistress of the farm. When he remembered, furthermore, the crime committed last night and Donoghue's connection with it, he could not restrain himself.

"Leave work this minute!" cried he, laying his hand on Donoghue's shoulder. "I discharge you!"

"Lay go me, Kew-een, lay me out, you're not me master!" said Donoghue, with dry lips and a timorous voice. "I'm not Molly Car——"

But, before he had done speaking, Hugh struck him in the mouth with his clenched fist and felled him on the rick. Losing all self-control for the moment and stooping down over him, Hugh said in a low voice: "I'll teach you I'm your master, you sneak and murderer!"

Donoghue's face grew pale: "Lay me out! Won't nobody save me?" he cried. But Quisk and Scarlant had already jumped on the rick, and, seizing Hugh, pulled him away from Donoghue by main force.

"Bate hell out of him, master Kew, he deserves it," cried Arnill. "Wollop him, welt him, walk on him, dance a jig on him, an' do every whole thing on him, for he's like a piece of an ould board, an' won't hear it. Fwhat a skoach he have to give lip to his betters!"

"Heisht a vyol! Fair play's bonny play!" cried Quisk.

"Give an Irishman fair play anyroad!" yelled Scarlant.

Hugh had let Donoghue go, but, turning to the servant-boy's abettors, he said: "I give every man fair play as well as an Irishman. I'd be as much ashamed of hitting an Englishman or a Protestant when he is down, as I would of hitting an Irishman or a Catholic."

The words were vague, but a guilty conscience is quick to scent a covert allusion. The conspirators did not know that Hugh and Molly had been in the wood. They had fled for their lives after the deed was done, and, though they heard the baying of Neptune and saw their colleague being chased by Hugh along the road, they left their principal to take care of himself.

"Up with the shaves!" cried Bill Darry, the feeder. "Lave off yer gladiatorin'! Quilt![4] Quilt! Stir yeerselves!"

"'Tis all caused be young blood, young blood!" screamed Tom Darry, the driver. "They has little to trouble 'em. Wau-terrr! Wautayrrh! She's dry!"

Hugh realised now that he was being glared at by Quisk, Scarlant, and Donoghue in a manner full of meaning; but his blood was up and he had no intention of retreating from his position.

"Cap fit, cap wear!" he said with slow distinctness; but he had no sooner uttered the words than he regretted having done so. He had not decided to inform the authorities. Where then was the use of enlightening the conspirators as to his own knowledge of last night's crime? What he had now done was tantamount to warning them that he knew their guilt. But—he would be going to confession to-night! And, courage failing him, he found solace in that thought.

"Waw-terr! Waw-waw-waw-terrr!" screamed Tom Darry again; and the episode was terminated for the present by the imperative call of the driver.

Hugh and Donoghue, being nearest to the engine, helped Tom Darry to pull out the empty puncheon from the water-tank, and to roll up a full one in its stead. Quisk and Scarlant returned to their posts at the straw-tossers, but Donoghue stood irresolutely looking at Hugh.

"I begs pard'n, Master Kew," stammered the cowardly servant-boy; "I was oany goin' on a-purpose, that's God's truth. That I mightn't, but I'd do is much is the next man for y', an' you knows I wouldn't say a word about Molleen if the boss was here. Lay me stay, will y'? Don't sack me overright the whole of 'em!"

Hugh, whose passion had now spent its fury, walked off without speaking; and Donoghue resumed work on the rick.

Hugh walked down into the yard, and having nothing else to do, turned into the kitchen to inspect the preparations for the men's dinner, which were proceeding there under the superintendence of Mrs. O'Fenton, former proprietress of the farm and now caretaker of the dwelling-house.

"On-hasp the half-door, Ellen Joney, an' let in the breeze to the fire," Mrs. O'Fenton was screaming from her post of authority in the parlour, just as Hugh entered the kitchen.

Dense clouds of yellow smoke filled the kitchen, and were effecting their exit in curling puffs from the door and open window, eschewing the wide chimney which opened upwards like a mine-shaft over the fire of green furze on the hearth. Hugh hesitated to enter.

"Och! Good-morrow, master Kew!" exclaimed Ellen Spilltan, Donoghue's mother. "How tinder you are o' the shmoke!"

The form of Mrs. O'Fenton appeared dimly visible at the parlour door: "Come into the room, Hugh," she cried, "'tis clane inside here; I want to spake to you about the mate!"

"Why do they never cut the furze in time, so that it would be dry for threshing day, and why don't they clean that chimney?" said Hugh. "This smoke is unbearable!" And bending low he rushed across the kitchen.

"Me own eyes are waterin' let alone the young masther's! Shuch, shuch!" exclaimed Mrs. O'Fenton.[5]

"Af they cut the furze a fortnight ago 'twould be stole now; an' little use to clane a chimbelly, af 'tis the will o' God to sind wind from the west," said Ellen Spilltan,

as she was called by those who regarded her in the light of Tom Spilltan's relict; *alias* Ellen Joney, the name favoured by those who looked upon her as Joan Spanessy's daughter; *alias* Ellen Kilpride, as she was addressed by those for whom she was her father's daughter. Besides those various patronymics she went by the nickname of Ellen the Furrow, which was equivalent to a record in rural history of the fact that her parents, during courtship, having met in the conacre potato garden,[6] whither each had come at eventide to dig the breakfast for their respective households, had been discovered by some neighbours embracing in the friendly shelter of a furrow, under the over-arching stalks of the leather-coats, then in full blossom. The epithet was frequently hurled at Ellen and her children in those public scolding bouts so prevalent in Ireland.

"They's the pig's cheek for the machine min an' the farmer's sons, that always sets t' ate here in the room," said Mrs. O'Fenton, laying a dish containing a boiled pig's head on the table.

"There isn't enough for four men in that," said Hugh.

"Enough, maw shay dhu hulla!" cried Ellen Spilltan. "'Twould be a rich man that could give their 'nuff o' mate to people. Th' ould lord used to do it, but ne'er another I ever seen."

"We'll manage, Hugh, we'll manage!" said Mrs. O'Fenton.

"Manage, gum-moh!"[7] said Ellen, "they're not for stall-feedin'. Lave 'em get an appitite with the bit o' mate, an' thin fill theirself with the pratees an' cabbage an' drink plinty sour milk to make um thirsty for the porther."

"Is the tierce tapped, Mrs. O'Fenton?" asked Hugh.

"Yes, every whole thing is ready, God bless the work!" she replied.

Hugh then left the kitchen and walked out of the yard by the gate leading southwards, into the bawn fields where the selected breeding ewes were. Molly Carew still occupied his thoughts, and he determined that he would search the whole farm for her. While with the sheep,

he kept close to the fences, for the two-year-old Leicester ram was inclined to attack persons unaccompanied by a dog. Notwithstanding the distraction of his mind, he counted the raddled ewes [8] from force of habit, and found that since he had previously reckoned them, their number had increased considerably. Exactness of this kind had been instilled into him from infancy by his father; and Hugh O'Dowla not only knew every horse, cow, sheep, and pig on the farm but also knew the individual history and genealogy of each beast.

He then walked farther south to where the colts and idle horses were; and to the inches where the milch cows were grazing, filling their creamy pink dugs with rich milk for the sustenance of the Gallowglass people. His mind was full of Molly Carew, but the black shadow of the murder cast a chill over his feelings which he had never experienced before. The grass was not as green as it used to be, nor the sky so blue, the singing of the birds did not sound so musically in his ears, the intangible hum of the life of nature which fills the silence of a well-kept, well-stocked farm, did not soothe him, as it had been wont to do. Here was the three-year-old short-horn bull coming up to learn what was the matter with his master's son. Hugh must move on, for nobody but Walsh, the cowman, and his collie could inspire terror into this colossal monarch of the succulent inches,[9] whose dark red curly forehead and dewlapped throat were so picturesque to look upon but so fatal to come into close contact with. While Hugh's eyes dwelt upon the graceful satisfying colours and outlines of the cows as they stood grazing or lay chewing the cud, luxuriously recumbent, he wondered if the world would ever be the same pleasant place again for him as it used to be before the awful events of the preceding night. He asked himself the same question when he left the inches and stood by the headland of a lonely fallow field, watching the crows and seagulls busy in the blood-red earth. He asked it again as he watched the curving quarters of the colts, their tapering legs and feathery tails, as they circled away from him. How friendly all nature seemed, and how happy all those beings

that lived its simple outdoor life ! Oh, would the shadow of this awful fear never pass from his mind ! But the evening would come, and since he could not find Molly Carew, he would—go to confession !

[1] Mr. W. E. Forster, appointed Chief Secretary in 1880, was nicknamed Buckshot, because he defended the practice of supplying the Royal Irish Constabulary with shot of that calibre.

[2] Charles Gavan Duffy.

[3] Mouth.

[4] Hurry.

[5] "Owing probably to the dense smoky atmosphere of the hovels, in which a hole in the roof was often the only chimney, blindness was unusually common, and innumerable blind fidders traversed the land and found a welcome at every fireside."—Lecky's *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. i., p. 317.

[6] Farmers in the South of Ireland often sub-let a field to a number of labourers, each of whom manures a patch of it and plants potatoes therein. Sometimes a small rent is charged; at other times the use of the land is given in return for the manure; oftener still the patch of potatoes is given in lieu of cash to the labourers employed on the farm.

[7] Well.

[8] The ewes which have mated with the ram, are marked red on the hind quarter, because the ram's breast between the forelegs is so coloured with a dry powder, or raddle, in the tupping season.

[9] Inch means marshy grass-land.

CHAPTER XIV

"Take up a weeping on the mountains wild."
—MILTON.

MEANTIME Molly Carew was wandering over the countryside restless and unhappy. When Hugh had left her, she deliberately returned to Brady's Wood and searched for the Great Dane's body, knowing that if it were discovered near the wood, Hugh O'Dowla could not fail to be implicated in the murder. Having found it, she lifted it on her shoulder and carried it by stages for a distance of nearly a mile, and pitched it into a deep cleft in a disused quarry. The effort was one entailing violent exertion, and the girl's muscles were still smarting from the strain when she chanced to espy Edward O'Brile going towards Brady's Wood. Still solicitous only for Hugh O'Dowla, she determined to follow young O'Brile; and, unluckily for herself, he had led her back to the scene of the murder, where she encountered the police.

When Molly Carew perceived that she had escaped out of range of the rifles, she wandered stealthily about the darksome brakes and gullies in the vicinity of Brady's Wood, greatly perturbed by the adventure. She then decided to travel far away from the wood, following the least frequented and most difficult pathways. Abandoning the idea of keeping her appointment with Hugh at Garekiln, she wandered up a deep glen until she came to the bound's-ditch of the stock-farm on which her father acted as herd.

She was strongly tempted to go home, but, in her agitated condition, she could not summon up courage to face the parental eye. She could picture her mother with oppressive distinctness sweeping the earthen house-floor, bustling about amongst the children and the fowl,

hurrying through her morning's work in her anxiety to get into Gallowglass early for her Saturday shopping. She, therefore, turned her back upon home and walked along the rushy bank of Gallowglass River, traversing bogs and inches, until she came to the well from which the river rose near the summit of a heather-clad hill called Brady's Mountain.

The well was a holy one, sacred to the Blessed Virgin, and was called the Tubbereen. Pilgrimages were made to it by pious persons who sought special favours from its patroness, on the 25th of March, the feast of the Annunciation ; and on the 15th of August, the feast of the Assumption. The stunted tree, hard by, was decked with rags said to have been left by persons whose sores had been healed, and several sticks and crutches lay upon the ground where they had been left by cripples whose limbs, it was assumed, had been miraculously restored to vigour. Over the spring was built an arch or portico, the face and sides of which were of whitewashed stone, and the roof was of green sods in which had been fixed a cross of whitened lath. The cross had been torn from its position, probably by the goats, horned sheep, or young cattle which grazed on the mountain. Molly picked it up and refixed it in its place. Seeing a rust-covered tin hanging on a rusty nail under the arch, she filled it, and drank its contents to the last drop ; and, when she had done, her lips were coated with the soft fresh rust.

"Oh ! Mother o' God !" she exclaimed, kneeling on the bank and joining her hands.

She whispered a "Hail Mary," but her spirit was not soothed. She yearned for some higher spiritual consolation ; and, not knowing how to obtain it, she longed for human society. The silence was unbroken, the sense of loneliness oppressive, and she felt herself an outcast, with no business on earth. Her nerves were still unstrung by the unprecedented occurrences of the morning. Her breathing quickened, her breast heaved, and she began to cry hysterically, as the reality of the danger from which she had escaped began to dawn upon her. She threw herself face forward on a dry bank of moss beside the well, and

for a long time she lay thus, until the sun, as it mounted higher, shot its rays fiercely upon her back and neck.

Becoming restless, she rose to her feet, climbed to the summit of the hill, and gazed, as if awestruck, at the wide prospect on all sides. To the north lay a great basin of land watered by the Bride and Blackwater and shut off apparently from the rest of Ireland by the lofty Galtees and Knockmealdown, which, though from thirty to fifty miles distant, were distinctly visible. Hundreds of square miles of country were mapped out before her in quadrilateral fields, varied by an occasional round Danish fort. South-east she could see the blue Atlantic, and her keen sight could occasionally catch glimpses of the white foam against the rocks of Knockadoon Head and green Cable Island.

Rudely bred as Molly was, she was not impervious to the grandeur of the scene. Her lips and nostrils quivered, and, standing on the topmost crag, she looked up like an eagle at the hard blue sky :

"God of all, and Maker of earth and heaven!" she cried, "have you any business of me in this wide world?"

The sounds of her own voice, heard with alarming distinctness in the silence, seemed to frighten her. Again she thought she saw the black-coated police ; again the shots rang in her ears. She looked to the south and saw her father's house and the farmyard at Garekiln, mere trivial items in the great panorama. Fixing her eyes on Garekiln, she thought of Hugh. The whitewashed houses, though mere specks in the landscape, stood out distinctly on the low ground. Then her keen eyes discerned a streak of smoke no bigger than a cobweb, and her heart yearned to be in the haggard at the threshing.

She descended the mountain side, sorely beset by the furze and heather ; and, as her pace grew faster, so the prospect narrowed, until the great world, of which she had caught a glimpse, had vanished like a dream ; and Garekiln, to which she was hastening, was no longer a trivial detail, but had once again become all the world for Molly Carew.

At length she reached the northern bound's fence of

John O'Dowla's farm; but when she had climbed over it, her pace slackened, and her gait showed an unaccustomed hesitancy. Presently the buzz of the thresher was borne to her ears, and, eager to be at work, she quickened her pace across O'Dowla's fields. She crossed the last fence and was walking slowly across the stubble field that lay next to the haggard. Once inside that square wall, amongst the corn, she felt she would be safe. She was no longer in terror of the police now, her fears being overpowered by the desire for companionship, and a feeling that any danger was preferable to solitude and inaction.

"Chri—! can I blee' me eyes?" exclaimed Donoghue, stopping work and shading his eyes with his hand to look at the tall figure wending its way toward him across the stubbles.

At that moment Hugh O'Dowla, sad at heart and nervous with terror, was entering the farmyard after his fruitless search for Molly Carew. As he stood on the kitchen threshold, Mrs. O'Fenton was saying: "Are they near it, Ellen?"

To which Ellen replied: "In the pints, ma'am, they may be called e'er a minnit."

"Go and look at 'em an' break wan!" said Mrs. O'Fenton. And Ellen, going to the twenty-gallon pot which was suspended from a small crane over the furze fire, lifted the cover, and picked up a potato between her finger-tips and flung it steaming into her apron in the hollow between her knees.

"They're done, they're breakin'! Call the min! Stop the work!" cried Mrs. Spilltan excitedly. "'Tis time too, the sun is after crassin' the thrashell; 'tis ha'past the corner, 'twill soon be at the hob!"

The women seemed in a frenzy, as Hugh passed into the parlour.

"Call 'em, Ellen!" screamed Mrs. O'Fenton, becoming frantically excited.

"Halloa! Hulloa! Halloa!" roared Ellen, waving her apron to attract the attention of the men in the haggard. "They're biled! They're biled!" she cried, as she caught a rick-maker's eye.

Then the steam whistle blew, the flywheel slowed, the driving belt was taken off, and the men came trooping down from the haggard, like boys at breaking up of school. They squeezed in through the kitchen door, chaff and straw clinging to their hair and necks and flannel waistcoats, perspiring, joking, pushing, and laughing.

"Help with the spuds,[1] ye looberas!" cried Mrs. Spilltan.

Dick Quisk and Moss Scarlant caught the great pot and stood it on the floor, where the potatoes were filled from it into cans and poured out on the coarse jute tablecloth, laid on for the purpose of being held up at the edges and thus keeping the potatoes from rolling on the floor.

At last the men and women, about twenty in number, were seated; a peggin[2] of sour milk and a plate of stock-fish and dip[3] were placed between each couple; and they set to work, "slugging" the thick milk, peeling the potatoes with their nails, breaking off little pieces of fish with their fingers, soaking the potatoes in the sauce, and making sops, or *bon-bouches*, of fish, potatoes, and dip. There were no knives and forks, and the stock-fish obviated the necessity for salt, while down the centre of the table ran the great heap of potatoes from which all could help themselves. Nothing can excel the politeness and consideration with which two Irish labourers thus make their dinner from the same plate.

"I never thought 'twould come to me turn," said Arnill, as he took his seat at the head of the table.

"Whey's Molleen?" cried his wife. "Hev some of the playboys tumbled her in the straw?"

Hugh was moving amongst the men replenishing their peggins, for it delighted him to see them eating, just as he liked to see his pups lapping milk, or his mare grinding her oats.

"Wisha, Masther Kew, gup an' bring her down," continued Mrs. Arnill. "She'd go through fire and water for yerself, but damn the foot she'd stir for us."

Hugh's face grew blood-red and he felt all eyes gazing at him. He put down the milk pail and said gravely: "I'll go up to her, and try to bring her in. I didn't know she was there."

"Lord love y' avickyo,"[4] said Mrs. Arnill, with that insinuating flattery in which the Irish labourers are such adepts, "I always knew you were a man an' a man's son."

When Hugh reached the haggard, to his amazement, he found Molly standing by the thresher, looking very abstracted, and, as Hugh thought, very imposing. The risk she had encountered that morning enhanced his admiration for her. He ran towards her, and, seizing her brown, chapped hands, said: "Molly, I didn't know you were here! Where were you? Are you hurt? Did the villains hit you?"

The girl's eyes were full of tears, as she scrutinised his face, and it was some time before she said: "Are you glad to see me safe?"

"Of course I am, Molly," he replied heartily. "Come to dinner. They told me you were here and I came to bring you in to your dinner."

Molly looked down at her figure. Her ragged dress had received many an additional rent since she left home on the morning of the previous day. "I'll go if *you* like," she said. "The bobbies are huntin' me, I feel it. And, as I could get no ease when I knew it, I came here. I saw the smoke o' th' engine from the hill an' I thought of ould times an' I had to come. Me legs brought me. If I am to be taken, lay me be taken here!"

"There is no danger," he whispered.

"Well done, Master Kew!" cried Mrs. Arnill, when the young couple appeared at the kitchen door.

"Welcome, Moll! They can't call you late for the praties anyway, girl!" cried Mrs. Spilltan. "Sig sheesh! set here."

Hugh would have liked to bring her into the room, to the select and reserved table where the engine men and farmers' sons were eating pig's cheek in homœopathic doses; but he felt that to do so, would cause herself unpleasantness and excite general jealousy. Besides, he did not relish the idea of sitting down at the same table with Quisk and Scarlant.

Molly walked quietly towards Mrs. Spilltan, but Dono-

ghue leered and winked at her, as she passed him, his mouth being full of sour milk at the moment. Molly blushed at his impertinence, and, raising her arm, dealt him a loose slap on the face with the back of her hand, which caused him to have a suffocating fit for several minutes, and swelled his lips for the day.

"Exarb that!" cried Arnill, "he deserved it, min; what? Didn't he?" and there was a roar of laughter up and down the tables.

"'Tis play to be hot be a girl," exclaimed Mrs. Spilltan. "Sure Molly was oany a-purpose, af she marked y' she'll marry y'!" continued the mother, endeavouring to cheer up her son's spirits, for she saw his tears rising. But Molly seemed as if the incident did not concern her, and sat down next to Donoghue's mother.

"'Tis sideways play how are you!" snuffled Donoghue. "I'd like to see your own gob after a welt like that. A-purpose gummoh!" [6]

"Couldn't you lave the girleen pass?" cried Arnill. "Fot a valla you sets on yerself, to wink at the finest girl in the parish."

"The cat may look at the king!" said Mrs. Spilltan.

Hugh O'Dowla admired Molly's coolness exceedingly, and, as he gazed on her, her appearance and carriage seemed to his longing eyes to be ideally beautiful. He had been hesitating as to whether he should take his dinner with the select company in the room, according to established usage; but this incident determined him to remain in the kitchen. And, to the surprise of all, he took up an empty bucket and placing it, mouth downwards, on a stool, seated himself at the corner of the table on Arnill's right hand, and peeling a potato with his fingers, and dipping it in Arnill's plate, he ate it with considerable relish.

"Will I bring down yer dinner to y', Hugh?" said Mrs. O'Fenton. "I has it in the basket waitin' for y'!"

"Do not, ma'am," he replied; "I'll take the same as the rest o' the company."

"An will I set on a chair while me master cuts his sate on a metal bucket?" cried Arnill, vacating his place and

lifting Hugh between his arms into the seat at the head of the table, amidst loud applause.

"Now we're right!" cried O'Larey, "we have the boss in the box sate!"

"Long life to the young master!" cried Walsh. "That you mightn't be long udout a maushthraush, Master Kew!"

"Are ye weddin' him already?" cried Arnill.

"I am, amossa!" replied Walsh.

"Good luck to his misthuss," said Mrs. Spilltan.

"Ammen a heerna!" exclaimed Mrs. Arnill.

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed the table from top to bottom, till the cobwebs fell from the rafters.

To Hugh this flattery was embarrassing. Visions of the feudal system, the baronial hall, the retainers and handmaidens, swept past his mental retina. To glance at Molly, to meet her eyes, to blush, was but natural under the circumstances. Molly blushed responsively under his gaze, but then tossed her hair from her forehead impatiently and stared along the table at the row of watching faces.

Just when the merriment was at its height, in the midst of the meal, the window was momentarily darkened by the passage of two black figures.

"Chripes above! the Bobbies!" yelled Donoghue, starting up.

Several of the others sprang to their feet, and there was general confusion. Dick Quisk and Moss Scarlant appeared at the parlour door, their faces white and scared. The next moment, Acting-Sergeant Drydoss, followed by Constable Webbilly, both being fully armed, entered the kitchen. The police had not suspected Molly's presence, though they had been in ambush for the past quarter of an hour waiting till the men had gone in to dinner. Drydoss could scarcely suppress his delight when his eyes now rested upon the girl. An awful silence supervened.

"Sit down, men, don't stir! Finish yeer dinner!" said Drydoss. "But while ye're ating, or eating, I'll say the few words I have to say to ye, as ornery civilians."

The men resumed their seats, except the select company

of four consisting of Quisk, Scarlant, and the two machine men, who remained squeezed together at the room door, their mouths wide open. All mouths were open as well as theirs, the workmen being evidently under the impression that the mouth was useful for hearing and seeing with, as well as for breathing and eating.

"Now hear me, civilians an' all as ye are!" said Drydoss, speaking with nervous emphasis, his words sounding like trumpet notes. "I want the min that were in Brady's Wood last night to stand forward."

During the fearful silence which followed this request, Hugh's heart sank and he felt as if judgment was at hand. Donoghue seemed mesmerised, but being in an inconspicuous position, his behaviour was not noticed. Quisk and Scarlant looked to earth, behind the machine men. No one stirred or spoke.

"Remember this is a hangin' business," said Drydoss, "but if the min that were in the wood last night will come forward now, and tell what they know, they'll be pardoned, if guilty; an' if innocent, get a large reward."

Again there was open-mouthed silence; the entire company being in attitudes of arrested action such as one sees in sculpture or in exhibitions of mesmerism.

"There will be a reward, won't there?" said Drydoss, addressing Webbilly, as if seeking for information on the point; but in reality the Acting's brain was busy devising what he styled a "russ," by which he could take Molly captive.

"An' any civilian that gives information leadin' to the conviction of the murderer will receive the reward," continued Drydoss.

"Fwhat use is that to us, sure, fwin we're not sevillans!" cried Arnill.

"Indeed ye are; every man here, exceptin' the two of ourselves, are civilians," replied the Acting-Sergeant.

"Begannies, I don't bleeve ye," cried Arnill. "Af 'twar a thing I was a sevillan, I'd hear it before this from me parish priest. All I knows about me body an' sowl I learned it from him. There's for you now."

Still there was no response. Hugh felt that he would

have come forward himself had the three accomplices not been there, but now he determined not to do so. As for Molly, she seemed utterly indifferent and the only unmesmerised person amongst the company.

"There's a young girl here that was in the wood last night!" said Drydoss incisively. "Why doesn't she stand forward?"

"You asked for a man!" snapped Molly, glaring at the policeman.

Drydoss hesitated to reply for a while: "An' what are you?" said he cynically.

"I'm wan that you did your best to shoot with your buckshot and ball this morning," she said, and, standing up, she raised her dress and exhibited her shin and calf which were heavily peppered with shot and very raw-looking.

"Shame! Shame!" cried the workmen, whose tongue-strings the familiar sound of Molly's voice had loosened. Till now they had heard nothing of how she was chased in the wood, and the sight of her wounds inflamed their ingrained antipathy to the police.

"Silence!" cried both policemen simultaneously.

"To hell wid ye!" cried Arnill fiercely.

"Be careful," said Drydoss sternly.

"No informers here!" yelled Quisk, seeing that both policemen produced their notebooks.

"Shut up, lave ye," cried Bill Darry, "the constables are doing their duty."

Hugh was unable to frame a syllable, and sat as still as if he were glued to his chair.

"Every mother's son an' daughter will have to account where they were last night," said Drydoss. "Webbilly, you note it as well as me." Then the name and address of every man present was demanded, and his account of how he had spent the previous night.

"I was never asked to count for meself before an' 'tisn't worth me while to biggen now, an' I won't do it nayther," said Mrs. Arnill. Drydoss had no intention of asking her, but he now felt moved to say in a stern voice, "You'll have to do it, ma'am."

"Well, af I must I will; I spint last night the same is every night under the tasther with me husband. There's for you now," she roared, and a general laugh ensued; for the widest verbal licence is permissible on all topics relating to courtship and marriage amongst the Irish labourers, though they are so shy and reticent on such points in the presence of strangers.

Ellen Joney burst into a ribald doggerel:

"He had me'a Christmuss
An' he had me at Aisther,
An' he had me last night
Onder the tasther."

Donoghue's turn came next. His voice was shaky and Hugh waited eagerly to hear his answers.

"Name?"

"Donoghue Spilltan, or Dinnis Spilltan af 'tis English ye wants."

"Where were you from ten till three o'clock last night?"

"In bed."

"Who did you sleep with?"

"Nobody."

"Who was in the house?"

"Me mother! There she's there," said Donoghue.

"That's the God's truth," said Mrs. Spilltan, who knew it was false, though she did not suspect her son of having had anything to do with Mr. Culvert's murder, believing him to have been at a wake.

Quisk and Scarlant answered similarly when their turn came, and no one could gainsay them.

"Now, Mary Carew, account for yourself. You know what we know already about you; but there's more that you don't know, so be cautious," said Drydoss, confronting her across the table.

"My case is well known," said Molly saucily. "I left home because me father bet me——"

"Thrue for ye, little girl!" cried Arnill.

"Thrue for ye!" cried twenty voices.

"I was trampin' about athout a bed to lie down on or a thing to put over me. I was in the wood airly in the

night, but I rambled out of it and to many a different place till mornin' when ye saw me there and did yeer best to kill me!"

"Oh! Oh!" "Shame!" "To hell with ye!" "Peelers!" "Peelers!" were the cries that resounded all over the kitchen. And the men beat their great fists on the table.

"I must arrest you!" said Drydoss. "And as you wouldn't stand this morning, I can't trust ye now."

Molly stood up. "By God, ye'll never take me!" she cried.

"Mind the door, Webbilly!" cried Drydoss, advancing to Molly with his handcuffs in his hands. Turning to the two Darrys, as the most responsible men present, he said: "In the Queen's name, I call for your assistance to take this girl."

But the Darrys turned their backs on him and walked into the room. "Naw fear!" muttered Bill Darry, the feeder.

Quisk began to sing in a loud voice: "God save Ireland, says the hayro!"

Scarlant and Donoghue joined in the song and then the chorus was taken up by all the men and women present. The crash of the men's voices in the low room was deafening.

Drydoss stood hesitatingly, his irons open in his hand; Molly had her back to the fire, which was now a heap of smouldering white ashes. He rushed at her. Hugh jumped forward and stood before him, while Molly stooped down and sprang up the wide chimney, climbing by the iron pot suspender until she rested on a projecting stone high enough to be out of reach. So quickly did she take action and so great was the confusion, that Hugh alone, of all present, was conscious of what she had done, although his back had been turned towards her.

The windows being very small, as is the case in most Irish farm-houses, the kitchen was gloomy; and, near the fireplace, now that the fire had died away, it was almost dark. No one appeared to have seen Molly vanish, so concentrated were all looks on Drydoss, who was now looking behind, alarmed at finding himself shut out from

Webbilly by a large number of men. Drydoss called to the constable to come to his assistance ; but, when he did so, his helmet was knocked off his head by an unseen hand.

Stooping to pick it up, he cried : " Where is she ? Seize her this minute, Webbilly ! Lave the way, Mr. O'Dowla ! "

Hugh was on the friendliest personal terms with Drydoss as with all the other police, since his childhood, but Drydoss now took him roughly by the collar and wheeled him out of his path, exclaiming : " I'm ashamed o' your father's son ! "

" Where is she ? " cried the Acting-Sergeant, amazed at not beholding his prey.

" She's here, she's here ! " cried Donoghue's voice near the door at the back of the crowd.

Drydoss and Webbilly rushed to the spot, but, on finding it a false alarm, looked extremely chagrined. The laugh was against them again. They were thus deceived many times, and at last the men seemed to lose all their accustomed fear of the constables, whom they jostled, tripped, nudged and crushed.

" We'll stand it no longer ! " cried Drydoss, who had become infuriated. " Draw your sword, Webbilly ! We'll put a few scars on the cow-boys' hides. The bloody serfs ! "

At that moment two pails of water were hurled in the policemen's faces, and their black tunics dripped like a Newfoundland dog's skin after a bath. A loud cheer followed the exploit. Wet and blinded, the constables rushed forward towards the door, but fell over a stool placed on purpose to trip them. Their guns were seized and dipped in the great pot, their pouches were watered, and, when they arose, they seemed completely defeated and cowed.

" Dungkey Drivers ! Dungkey Drivers ! " cried the women, knowing that the police resented this epithet exceedingly, as referring to their ignoble duty of empounding stray asses and summoning the owners, a work whose performance brought them into frequent antagonism with

the labouring class who grazed their animals on the road-sides.

"Ye're cowards!" cried Drydoss, "twinty to wan is onfair."

"Ye'd do the same, ye Judases!" yelled Donoghue.

"They would so, the Scaryots!" cried Mrs. Spilltan.

The constables ran out into the yard and were pelted with a fusilade of potatoes first, and sods and stones afterwards, as they fled down the boreen [7] and escaped into the high road.

"Give 'em the hardies!" cried Quisk, hurling a piece of flinty macadam with unerring aim at the retreating constables.

There was loud laughter and jubilant self-congratulation when the workmen returned from the chase.

"That was the divil's value!" laughed Arnill.

"'Twas great game intirely," chuckled Scarlant.

"That bates cockfightin'!" said Donoghue.

"Come on to work!" cried Tom Darry, the driver, "'tis the safest for ye! Blee me they'll be more heard o' this."

"What about the tierce? We must get our porther!" cried several. A shout of acclamation welcomed the suggestion, and they ran like colts to the dairy door, where Hugh was standing key in hand, and surrounded him.

"Whey's Molleen?" cried several.

"She's safe," replied Hugh, going towards the tierce.

"Good look to the young masther!" cried Arnill.

"Ammen a heerna!" gasped Walsh, the cowman, who was exceedingly thirsty.

"Good wife to him!" cried O'Larey. "That he may get a gross wan!"

"Heisht a vyol!" [8] screamed Ellen Spilltan. "'Tisn't Mother Oakley he wants with twins or three wanst a year, but a lady wid purty hands so clane an' daysent."

Hugh turned the tap and let the porter run into a tub until the froth was swelling over the edges; and he then proceeded to serve every man with three half-pint glasses.

When Arnill, who happened to be the first, came up to the tub-side, he stood like a chained dog waiting for his draught; then he took the glass from Hugh's hand, looked

at it critically against the light, and emptied it at one swallow, saying, as he handed it back to be refilled: "Lord lave you your health, Masther Kew!" When he had finished his third, he drew the sleeve of his flannel waistcoat across his mouth and backed his way out through the crowd, to an old barrow that was lying against the wall, and seating himself upon it, lit his pipe.

When all had drunk, work was resumed; but not until a group of Gallowglass girls had been tossed in the straw and kneaded like dough by the young bloods amongst the workmen, which was the gallantry of the threshing yard. These girls had been sent out by their mothers with sacks to be filled with oaten chaff for their bed-ticks, being under the impression that it was oats that was to be threshed that day.

"Ah, me darlin's, we'll be at th' oats a Monday!" yelled Darry, the driver, who was considered a great "daltheen," or male flirt.

"Wisha, ain't th' ould ticks soft enough for ye, ye bolkishes?"[9] cried Quisk, springing upon the nearest girl and rolling her in the straw. The girls were all repeatedly seized in this way and subjected to very rough treatment by the young men, till the steam whistle of the engine imperatively called all hands to work. Then the girls, red and panting, spent half an hour picking husks and straw out of their hair, ears, necks, and clothes before starting for home.

Molly was used to act a leading part in this horseplay, or girl-tossing, and to-day they missed her.

Bill Darry said to the girls: "I'd rather get a clout from her fist than be ticklin' the likes o' ye. Every arm of her is like a man's thigh, an' her leg is as big is yer boney bodies!"

"Ye'll never rowl Moll aggin, amossa; she's branded be Kew," said Mrs. Arnill, laughing.

"Af he marked her, he'll marry her!" roared Bill Darry, the feeder. "Up with the shaves, ye bolkishes! She's runnin' impty."

Quisk, Scarlant, and Donoghue were whispering together by the haggard wall apart from the rest.

Boom-m-m-m! Buzz-z-z-z! sang the drum of the thresher, humming the beautiful hymn of work in the threshing yard, to the time beaten by the puffs of the engine, amidst the jargon of Irish and English, of curses and prayers, from the men and women around it, who feared the machine as a monster that worked them to the last gasp and could not be neglected for an instant.

The three accomplices returned to their work reluctantly.

"The day is changin'!" screamed the driver from the ground to his brother, the feeder, on the board.

"The wind is gone south!" screamed the feeder, working away. "'Twill rain before night. We must finish the rick is we opened it."

"How aisy you has it!" cried Mrs. Arnill. "I have me marketin' to do after work. We're as good as kilt from you this day."

"Sleep plinty to-morrow mornin', 'tis Sunday! But here with the shaves, or I'll sling wan o' ye into the drum o' the machine," roared Bill Darry. "Af I had the Colleen Moor, I'd say back o' me hand to the lot of ye, tubs o' guts!"

"Up with the shaves! The rain is comin' from the south!" was the cry, and everyone worked with redoubled energy at his or her allotted task, though the eye of the master was not on them and the master's son had other fish to fry.

"They can't keep up that steam long without more porther," said the driver, as if talking to his engine. "I wished I could see Hugh about it. He'd give um lashings[10] o' beer."

[1] Potatoes. [2] A wooden drinking vessel. [3] Onion sauce. [4] My son. [5] Sit down. [6] In jest indeed! [7] Little road, lane. [8] Hold your tongue. [9] Lazy people. [10] Abundance.

CHAPTER XV

"For a maid again I can never be,
Till the red rose blooms on the willow tree.
Of such a trouble I've heard them tell,
And now I know what it means full well."
—WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

MRS. O'FENTON's husband had been the tenant of Garekiln prior to John O'Dowla's acquisition of the farm, and was one of the many farmers who had wasted their substance during the good years, and had collapsed under the first breath of adversity. His wife had never borne any children, and was one of those soft-hearted Irishwomen who learn little or nothing from experience. When mistress of Garekiln, during her husband's life and after his death, she was what the peasants call a flauhool [1] woman, that is to say, a woman whose chief amusement was that of parting with her own property. After a long career of extravagance, she had to assign her goodwill to John O'Dowla, her largest creditor; and that worthy man granted her a small allowance, free fuel and milk, and a room in the dwelling-house her husband had built, and in which she had started housekeeping with a fortune of a thousand pounds.

Hugh O'Dowla was in the kitchen now, superintending Mrs. O'Fenton and Ellen Spilltan as they helped Molly Carew to remove the soot from her hair and clothes, an interesting sight for a young man; but Molly was as restless as a colt enduring the friction of brush and curry-comb for the first time.

"They thought they had you, the rivils o' peelers," muttered Mrs. Spilltan, "but the min 'ud never have it said they left you be taken. They'd be the show o' the country af they did."

Hugh O'Dowla was anxious for a private conversation

with Molly, so as to hear from her own lips a full account of what had occurred in Brady's Wood that morning. When conscience admonished him of the danger of a *tête-à-tête*, he reaffirmed his resolution to return to Gallowglass, when he had heard everything, interest himself in the fate of Edward O'Brile, and—prepare for confession. The opportunity for an exchange of confidence now seemed to be at hand; but Mrs. O'Fenton, examining Molly's soot-begrimed rags and scrutinising Hugh's expectant face, suddenly said: "Come upstairs, Mary, I have a gownd I'll lind you for th' evening instead o' them old duds till you goes home to your mother."

"Leam M'Gurk is abroad, he wants to shpake to Master Kew!" shouted Ellen Spilltan from the doorstep.

Hugh protested against the interruption, but he stepped out into the farmyard, where he found a small farmer from an adjoining townland, who supplemented his income by dealing in horses, waiting to see him.

"Good-day, William," said Hugh, "I suppose you came about the colt?"

"Good day an' good look t' y', Eujane," answered M'Gurk. "Isn't himself [2] wid ye to-day?"

M'Gurk knew that John O'Dowla rarely came to Garekiln on Saturdays, and he had expressly selected that afternoon for his visit in hopes that the son would prove more offhand in his dealings than the parsimonious father. The negotiations for the purchase of this three-year-old colt had been open between John O'Dowla and William M'Gurk for over six weeks. O'Dowla wanted forty pounds and M'Gurk had offered thirty, and the colt had been examined again and again by the intending purchaser and his friends.

"My father is too busy in Gallowglass to come out to-day," said Hugh, impatient to get rid of the jobber. "Are you prepared to give the forty? Or, maybe, you want to see the colt again? If you do, I can't show him to you to-day as we're busy threshing."

The farmer, anxious to clinch the bargain in John O'Dowla's absence so that he might get the horse on easier terms, said: "I'm very hard up for money, times is so

bad, an' me brother out in Ballyownshuch is struck wid paralysis an' askin' me for help. I has thirty-two pound tin here wid me an' that I mightn't draw another breath if I has another pinny." He put his hand into his breast and drawing out a knotted handkerchief he laboriously opened it and showed Hugh thirty-two single bank notes and half-a-sovereign, sighing and groaning as he did so.

Hugh's compassionate nature was moved by the farmer's speech.

"I'll take it on myself to split the difference between himself an' yourself," said Hugh. "I'll give the colt to you for thirty-six pounds five."

Having secured this concession, which would never have been obtained from John O'Dowla, the dealer began to regret having offered so much.

"Amoshta, you might is well ask me a hunderd an' thirty-six, Masther Hugh. What's nauthin' to a strong man like yer father is a whole fortune to an angashore[3] like meself." And he began to roll up the money as if preparing for a long bout of haggling.

Hugh, softened at the apparent dejection of the man and eager to dismiss him, said: "I'll give him to you for thirty-five, but I'll never hear the end of it from my father."

M'Gurk thrust a pound-note as earnest into Hugh's hand, saying: "I'll shplit it wid you. Thirty-three fifteen. Take it an' you'll have look. Yer father oant say wan word to y', an' if ever it comes to me turn, I'll do is much for y' 'nother time. I hope I'll soon see you masthur here in yer own right with the finest girl in the country for yer misthuss. I hears the Flauhooil girls are all cracked after you, an' if you'd ever be thinkin' of comin' after wan of 'em, I might be able to make it aisy for you!"

Hugh blushed and smiled self-complacently, crumpling up the bank-note in his hand. The Misses Flauhooil were not at all in his line, but the compliment confused him.

"When'll you take the colt?" he said, ignoring the suggestion.

"Now, amoshta," replied M'Gurk, and inserting his index finger between his teeth he emitted an ear-splitting

whistle, whereupon his son, a young man of Hugh's age, came running into the yard with a halter and rope on his arm and followed by a sheep-dog.

"As the min is so busy we'll turn the colts into the yard ourself," said M'Gurk, making for the fields.

Meantime Mrs. O'Fenton was revelling in her natural element, being one of those charitable Irish souls who give all their substance to those who ask peremptorily for it, and who cannot resist the temptation of acceding to every unreasonable request. Going upstairs, she rummaged in her clothes-press, where she found a thirty-years-old holland dress. But, after some cogitation, she pushed the holland aside and drew forth her own old-fashioned wedding-gown of bright blue silk, in which she proceeded to array Molly, much against the girl's inclination. Tears rolled down Mrs. O'Fenton's cheeks at sight of that bright blue dress in which, thirty-five years before, she had looked so pretty as a bride. It awakened such pleasant memories of that famous wedding in Ballyownshuch that she went into transports at seeing the gown displayed on Molly's splendid figure. It also pleased the silly woman to dwell upon the joy which the sight would give to Hugh, and the astonishment it was certain to arouse in Ellen Spilltan.

"Lord! What a grand dress entirely to be in that cupboard!" cried Molly, when she beheld the blue silk trimmed with Youghal lace at neck and wrists, and heard its full skirt, made for the crinoline, rustling in Mrs. O'Fenton's hands.

"Never take the book be the cover, Mary Carew," said Mrs. O'Fenton; "many the hunderd pound's worth that cupboard held in its day!"

She pronounced the dress a perfect fit, and brushed Molly's blue-black hair away from her low forehead and plaited it into a pigtail which reached almost to her knees. Then surveying her work approvingly, she said: "Come down to the room, child," and the poor woman led the way, her heart palpitating with emotion.

"Mother of God!" cried Ellen Spilltan, staring spell-bound at the apparition in bright blue which appeared behind Mrs. O'Fenton on the stairs.

Hugh had just entered the kitchen, being temporarily released from the M'Gurks. Mrs. O'Fenton smiled triumphantly and looked at him, as she said to Molly: "Take up your skirt, child, whilst crossin' the kitchen floor." Molly stooped backwards and picked up the ample folds of the rustling skirt with that robust grace which is so general amongst muscular Irish country girls.

Hugh's head whirled at the dazzling sight. The episode eclipsed all the previous pleasures of his brief life. The young man had no experience of female society, and it now seemed to him as if Molly were arrayed in robes as gorgeous as any queen of romance had ever worn. Forgetful of the sea of trouble in which he was adrift, forgetful of his imprisoned friend, of the personal danger to which the partial betrayal of his secret during the quarrel with Donoghue had exposed him, oblivious of everything but the sensual delight of the moment, Hugh gazed enraptured upon the transfigured girl.

He rushed to Molly's side and seized her hand: "I'm deeply grateful to you for this, Mrs. O'Fenton," he said; "I'll never forget it for you."

Mrs. O'Fenton led the way into the parlour, exclaiming: "You didn't ate your dinner, Hugh! Here's the basket unopened!"

"Let us have it now!" cried Hugh; and the basket, being opened, was found to contain two bottles of stout, several cuts of bread and butter, and some thick slices of cold roast mutton.

"They expected himself would be here!" said Mrs. O'Fenton. "That's dinner for two."

"Put plates for two, ma'am," replied the young man, overpowered by the responsibility of such an order, and squeezing Molly's hand as he spoke.

"Which?" exclaimed Mrs. O'Fenton. "Is it a-purpose you are to me?"

"Put plates for two," repeated Hugh, blushing crimson. "I mean it!"

"Amoshta! you have a misthuss for yerself now or never, Masther Owen!" said Ellen Spilltan, who believed that fine feathers made fine birds in every sense except

the ornithological—for she would have preferred the commonest laying Minorca to the gaudiest peacock in the world. Molly was very hungry, but Hugh had to force her to eat; for, like most Irish peasants, she felt it a shame to display an appetite for food before strangers. Hugh's imagination was inflamed almost to fever height by the novelty of the adventure, and he abandoned himself to the influence of her creamy pink-brown skin, her tulip-red lips and shining blue-black hair; while she recounted her hairbreadth escape from the police.

He was startled from his day-dream by the voice of a workman, who suddenly put his head into the room and shouted: "Tom Darry want ye, Master Kew!"

"Which?" exclaimed Hugh, aroused from a trance.

The man repeated his message.

"I can't stir," cried Hugh in confusion. "Tell him tell you what he wants an' let you tell it to me."

The man went off, and straightway spread the news in the haggard that there was "a rale lady with a grand dress on her in the room with Master Kew, atin' her grub with him."

"Who can she be above ground?" cried Mrs. Arnill. "Af 'tis a thing 'tis Miss Julia, the sky must be goin' to fall. But may be he's not in airnest at all, oany a-purpose."

Tom Darry asked Arnill, as the most sensible man present, to stand by the engine till he returned, and then ran at break-neck speed across the yard to the kitchen, impelled to take this exertion both by anxiety to return to his engine and by the accelerating force of curiosity.

He took off his hat in the kitchen before entering the room. Mrs. O'Fenton and Ellen were laughing at him, but he did not heed them.

"Where's Owen? Master Hugh or Eujane I ought to say!" said he, correcting himself.

They laughed again, but Mrs. O'Fenton condescended to say, "Which? Is it Hugh? He's in the room. You can guine."

Shy and sheepish looked Tom Darry, the engine-driver, as he clung to the jamb and put his uncovered head and blackened face into the room, saying: "I wants a word

wid ye, Master Hugh, or Eujane I should say, axing yer pardon."

Hugh was momentarily taken aback at Darry's shyness and respectful mode of address, but he said: "Come in, Tom. What d'ye want?"

Darry stepped in: "Which? What? Divil be from me what a fool I was!" he cried, staring at Molly. "How aisy 'tis to make an eejut o' me after all me time! Blood-a-nouns, I didn't know Moll from Adam! Och! och! och! But I always said she was a beauty. I knows it now wanst for all. Well, well, well, to be sure! Ayeh-yeh-yeh!"

Nothing could have delighted Hugh O'Dowla more intensely, while Molly herself grew more attractive than ever, as her colour heightened under the influence of the compliment.

She looked archly at Darry without wincing: "I often heard that engine-drivers held the belt for impudence, but I knows it now! Well, well, well, to be sure!" she said pertly, tossing her head and showing her teeth as she mimicked Tom Darry. "Ayeh-yeh-yeh!"

"Af you were the Marcus o' Carrabbus," said Darry, still gazing at Molly, "you couldn't have a finer girl to yer cheek! My, my, my, my! 'Tis well for you, Master Hugh!" But, checking himself, he added: "I must be off. 'Tis what brought me in is this. The wind is gone sutherdly an' the rain'll be here to-night, so we must finish the reek. They're working like red divils as it is, but adout more porther they can't do it, so I wants more porther given out, af you plaze, an' at wanst!"

"Give it all to 'em!" cried Hugh, flinging the key of the store-house to Tom Darry, who picked it up and left the room.

Molly's handsome apparel produced a remarkable effect on the engine-driver. "I never rightly noticed all her good pints before," said he, "but sure no matter how sharp a man is, he can't see everything nor quarter everything. Well, well, well, to be sure!" As if ashamed of his momentary weakness he said gruffly to Mrs. Spilltan: "Come, Ellen, and ketch up a tub full o' beer with me to

the haggard. I'll keep it near meself an' give it out fair an' square to 'em ! "

Hugh O'Dowla, forgetful of past and future, remained in the parlour with Molly Carew, and we shall not raise the veil from the proceedings of the intoxicated youth.

" Trouble will be th' ind o' this," said Ellen Spilltan as she helped Darry to carry the porter to the haggard.

" Heisht a vyol, ye magpie, weren't you young wanst yerself ? " said Darry.

" Af I was, I knew me aykils," retorted Ellen the Furrow.

" Fashins is changed now, vanithee," [4] said Tom Darry. " Didn't Lord Gallowglass's son marry a gipsy's or a tinker's daughter ? An' kin a body ketch up a paper in his fist adout seein' news about the jukes an' th' acthresses."

" That's different, far beg." [5]

" 'Tis nat, woman ; youth must have its fling. Don't I know what an actheress is meself ? I seen two of 'um walkin' the streets o' Cork wanst. An' if they're good enough for a juke, isn't Moll too good for Hugh ? "

" Will he marry her ? " asked Ellen.

" Which ? If he don't I'd break his face with me own fist, as sure as God is above me ! " roared Darry.

When they reached the haggard, Darry called out in Irish to his brother, the feeder : " Oweneen O'Dowlagh oggus Maurya Careweagh a serree ! " [6] And raking out the cinders he sang :

> " Now, Rory, lave off, sir, you'll hug me no more,
> That's eight times to-day that you've kissed me before.
> ' Then here goes another,' says he, ' to make sure,
> For there's luck in odd numbers,' says Rory O'More." [7]

The news spread instantly, and Molly, who was already regarded as a martyr and heroine, owing to her encounter with the police, rose higher still in the estimation of all. More than one man crept down, unknown to the Darrys, and peeped in at the parlour window to see Hugh and Molly ; but most of those spies failed to discover the enamoured couple.

At length the horses came galloping into the yard closely

followed by the M'Gurks, and their arrival created dire confusion amongst the cows which were being milked in the open air. M'Gurk's dog fell foul of Walsh's dog and a fierce battle ensued, provoking volumes of curses from the owners of the canine combatants. Walsh said M'Gurk's dog was a bastard, and M'Gurk called Walsh himself a "shpalpeen fawnuch." [8] The bull was roaring like a lion, enraged at the unseasonable intrusion, and was pawing the ground, while the air blew from his nostrils like steam from a safety-valve. At length the herd of horses were successfully driven into one of the large unoccupied cowhouses, and the M'Gurks, after considerable difficulty, caught their colt and let him forth.

Mrs. O'Fenton broke in upon Hugh's elysium and said: "Leam M'Gurk wants to know will he give yerself the whole o' the money now or will he wait an' pay himself?"

"I don't mind," said Hugh, but, as he was speaking, the elder M'Gurk came in, being a fellow-countryman of Mrs. O'Fenton's from Ballyownshuch, and said: "I'll pay yerself, Owen, I knows you'll gi' me a dacent lookpinny!"

"Very well," said Hugh, who was in such an emotional frame of mind that he had almost forgotten the price of the horse.

"You'll gi' me the thirty-five shillins fur look. I knows you will, Hugh. God sind yuh look wid yer handsum young girl."

Hugh's brain was on fire. "Take it, take it!" he exclaimed, as he accepted thirty-one pounds from the hand of M'Gurk and placed them with the thirty-second pound in his vest pocket. "Go up to the haggard," he continued, "and Tom Darry will give y' a drink o' porter!"

"Dacent boy!" said Mrs. O'Fenton. "Ma grine chree ha!"

"A free flauhoill gorsoon!" said Mrs. Spilltan. "Gad bless him!"

"He'll have the more look for it," said M'Gurk, hastily taking himself off, having got his colt for at least eight

pounds less than he would ever have obtained him from John O'Dowla.

Mrs. O'Fenton sat down to rest singing :

> "Oh, weary's on money, and weary's on wealth,
> And sure we don't want 'em while we have our health ;
> 'Twas they tempted Connor far over the sea,
> An' I lost my lover, my cushla ma chree."

"He's drinking forenenst her!" cried O'Larey, when he returned to the haggard after a clandestine trip to the parlour window. "An' she's liker to the Virgin Mary, I ax God's pardon, than any statsha I ever seen!"

"He hev her in his lap!" was the next message brought back to the haggard by Walsh, "an' that I mightn't ever, but she's a colleen bawn gudeeruch,[9] the grandest girl in Ireland!"

Even the sheaf-cutters on the board made excuses to leave at intervals to get a glimpse at the dress and its wearer. When Mrs. Arnill returned, she said : "She's that transmogrified, I'd never know her. But af I was gaspin' on me bed o' sickness, I'd swear before me last judge she was a beauty altogether!"

"Sha gudeeruch!"[10] said the feeder.

Mrs. Arnill's husband deprecated this spying, but he too walked down to the kitchen, and disdaining to look in at the window, walked boldly into the parlour with his great straw hat in his hand.

"I begs pard'n, Misther Kew," he said. "Don't take her off yer lap! Don't, don't, 'tisn't lucky! A cow, nor a mare, nor any faymale thing, even a sow, should never be disturbed, whin they're at their aize, af it can be avoided! Keep her there an' give her a hug to ye an' a kiss. Don't mind me ; sure I done it meself at yer age. I kem down to see her, an' sure I sees her now, an' I'm satisfied. Och! och! och! It don't take riches to make beauty. I allvays said so an' now I knows it sure enough. 'Tisn't the parish alone, but I'd put the three parishes to it, to show her aykil. I wish y' luck wid her, an' long life! God direct ye!"

"What do y' say to it, Arnill?" said Tom Darry.

"I says he's fond o' the women; an' I says I'll fight any man in the haggard that says he can show me a finer cut of a girl anywhere than she is!"

"I likes both of 'um too," assented the engine-driver, "but I says I'll break every bone in his body, an' smash his face an' bust his ribs, if anything happens to Moll, an' if he don't marry her. Her mother was a farmer's daughter, though they were shmall people."

"He'll do it, too!" said Arnill, laughing. "He's as free a boy is ever I seen. He has no howlt an munny nar porther."

"No man could ax to have a finer wife so far is appearance goes," said Darry. "When she's a few years married, she'll be is wide is e'er a door in the house, and what more do a man want than a gross healthy woman to make his butter an' rear his childern?"

"She'll do it, too!" said Arnill. "She'll fill the house full of 'um quick. I remimbers her mother's people that's all gone to 'Merica these many years."

"Is for marridge," cried Mrs. Arnill, shrieking from the feeding board, "they's more married than keeps good houses. An' is for childerr, God bless 'em, wan could have too much uv a good thing sometimes av 'twas the will o' God! I never had any o' me childer, thanks be to God, only whin work wasn't to be had; the few I has, God bless 'em, I had every year after the turnips war thinned, an' I was out an' well before the harvest in time for the bindin'. Me man never lost nautin' be me!"

"Hould your prate!" roared her husband. "'Tis no thanks to *you* for it, if it be!" At which the haggard laughed.

"Whin Moll gets a bit o' feedin'," screamed Bill Darry, the feeder, "an' can take her aize, she'll be six fut high an' a tin fut girth oant close around her. I seen the likes o' her wanst before in the parish o' Neenawhoona. She'll take her feed an' she'll sthretch fair an' quite at her aize, an' watch the childerr roulin' theirself atop of her whin the butter is in the firkin. To look at her in five or six years' time, wid a family round her, 'll be atin'

an' drinkin' for any man, lave alone the man that owns her. The wilder they're before, the quiter they're after. I knows it for I sees it. Up wid the shaves!"

"Aize and good grub does a dale surely," said Mrs. Arnill, meditatively, for she respected the opinion of the feeder; "but she's too young entirely, the crayture."

"Which? Hould your tongue, woman," yelled the feeder; "a woman is in her prime at fifteen, but a man isn't in his prime till thirty. 'Tis of the min you're thinkin'. Ho, ho, ho! Here with the shaves! Stir yeerselves, ye bolkishes!"

The shades of approaching twilight were making themselves felt in the parlour; and the consciousness of coming trouble had dawned upon the re-awakening mind of Hugh O'Dowla.

"I have to go to confession an' I wish it was over!" he was saying remorsefully.

Molly laughed and said: "I wished you could kill two birds with wan stone an' go for me as well as yerself."

"Then I'm to give you half my blessing, am I?" said Hugh, with a melancholy smile, and he recited a verse from Lover's well-known ballad:

"O, I'm not meself at all, Molly dear, Molly dear,
Th' other day I went confessin', an I axed the Father's blessin',
'But,' says I, 'don't give me wan intirely,
For I fretted so last year, but the half o' me is here,
So give the other half to Molly Brierly.'
O, I'm not meself at all!" [11]

"'Tis oany a-purpose I am," Molly replied.

"If you go to confession often," continued Hugh, "you don't have much to tell. But when a person puts off going they forget their sins, an' 'tis only at times like this they come back on you all in a heap."

"Is it long since you were there?" asked Molly.

"It is so. 'Tis over three months. What I dread about confession is that before you get absolution you have the humiliation of telling the priest things you are ashamed of your life for having done. Sometimes he doesn't seem to hear, but you can never tell."

"I don't fret so much about that," said she. "The priest isn't very hard on girls like me. But, sure he hears so many people's sins, he must be hard set to know wan tale from another."

"If I could know for certain I was forgiven, I'd be satisfied," Hugh went on; "but as for God troubling Himself directly about a thing like me, with all the world on His mind besides—. But I needn't say that, for we are told that He troubles Himself about the sparrows and the very hairs of our head."

"In a gineral way that may be," said Molly Carew seriously, "but sparrows requires very little mindin', and, as for the hairs o' me head," here she caught the long mass of plaited black hair and twisted it round her neck like a rope, "it needs no mindin' aither. I'd like to have someone always to be watchin' me. I wished I was a calf, or a lamb, or a sparrow even, for then I'd always be sure of enough to ate and to wear."

"I don't feel long the better for confession," said Hugh.

"'Tis a quair world," said his companion. "Me mother says the worst night-walkers and flirts in the parish goes to confession an' communion every Sunday, an' yet she b'lieves in it herself!"

When Quisk, Scarlant, and Donoghue had got their allowance of porter, they slinked out of the haggard at intervals one by one. Their desertion being remarked by the driver and feeder, Hugh was imperatively called out to keep the work going until the rick was finished, and Mrs. O'Fenton took advantage of his absence to remove the wedding gown and give Molly her holland dress in its stead.

Molly Carew could not rest long in idleness, and she went up to the haggard, looking remarkably attractive in the holland dress. She found Hugh piking sheaves to the feeding-board, having taken Donoghue's place; while Arnill had taken his stand alone by the straw-tossers, where Quisk and Scarlant had been, and was doing the work of two men.

"You were never more wantin'," cried the feeder when

he beheld Molly. "The young master is near dead from throwin'; get a pike an' help him."

The girl readily did as he desired, and pitched the sheaves up to the feeding-board in such abundance that even Bill Darry's fears, lest the machine should run idle, were speedily set at rest.

"I feels aizy in me mind now for wanst this day," he cried. "We'll not run impty in the want o' shaves aggin to-night!"

Hugh was greatly relieved by the timely succour, for, though accustomed to giving orders and helping for short intervals, he was not used to continued hard work, and his brow was wet and his arms strained when she came to assist him.

The sun had set, but still the engine puffed and the buzz of the drum resounded. Twilight was verging into darkness, and the sparks from the funnel grew redder and redder against the blackening night clouds.

"I'll finish that bun of a reek or die!" cried Bill Darry, the feeder, for the threshing had been taken by him on piece work. "What is it but a tayskawn?"

"'Tis dangerous!" roared Arnill from the tossers. "The shparks'll set the reeks afire!"

"Whisht! y' ownshuch,"[12] cried the driver, "weren't the sparks there all day is well is now, only you couldn't see 'em?"

"I don't bleeve ye!" yelled Arnill, tossing off the straw to the pikemen. "Yerra, fwat an alaan[13] you thinks you has!"

"We can hardly see the corn runnin' our the shoots!" cried the bag men.

"'Tis no loss," roared the driver, "yeer eyesight 'ud do it no good. Glaum yeer bag like ye'd ketch a girl, an' whin 'tis full, shut down yeer slide, an' in wid an impty bag; an' lave the min heiss the full wan away to the barn."

"God! Look at thim sparks on the reek!" cried Arnill.

"Which? I tell you, me honest man, they war there all day," roared Tom Darry. "Do you want me to take me oath?"

"Af you did inself I couldn't bleeve you," screamed O'Larey.

"The next thing you'll tell us is that the stars wor there all day, only we couldn't see 'em!" said Arnill, looking up at the sky.

"So they were, Arnill," cried Hugh.

"Ho! ho! That settles it," roared Arnill. "For we all know that's a lie!"

And thus they grumbled and worked in the dark, till the last sheaf was up, the last binder cut, and the sweepings of the feeding-board hurled into the whirling threshing drum by Bill Darry, the feeder. Then the whistle blew and pikes were thrown down. The engine slowed, the buzz of the drum died out, and the belt was taken down, rolled up and put into its place. And every farmer across the valley to the north, two miles away, knew that the O'Dowlas had stopped threshing, for the wind was from the south.

"A great day's work!" roared Tom Darry, the engine-driver.

"A great day's work! Glory be to God!" cried his brother Bill.

"Thau morra va gut!" [14] groaned Mrs. Arnill, knotting her headkerchief under her chin.

Work being successfully concluded, the men assembled to receive their duch-un-durrish [15] at the dairy door. There was much conversation in the gloaming, and the departure of Quisk, Scarlant, and Spilltan did not escape comment.

"I never thought much of ayther wan or th' other o' thim three gintlemen," said Darry, the feeder, a truth-telling man.

"Nor I!" cried Arnill, a blunt, sensible man.

"Here's the same," said Walsh, a time-server.

"Thrue for ye, a vickyos," roared O'Larey, who agreed with everything.

"Yerra, the gorsoons [16] are is God med um," said Mrs. Spilltan, defending her son.

"I s'pose we may all expect Whereases [17] for the next court day, over the fight with the peelers!" said Darry,

the driver, a popularity hunter, lighting his pipe and anxious to change the conversation.

"Yeh wisha, time inuf to bid the divil good-morrow whin a body meets him!" screamed Arnill, rushing down the boreen after his wife. "Good-night an' safe home, min an' wimin!"

"I wants to buy a pair o' gallusses!" [18] he said when he overtook Mrs. Arnill; "me shoulders are cut from thim pieces o' shthrings, and I can't wear a belt."

"You wants another pint, you mane," said his wife; but she did not oppose him, and they walked into town, he at one side of the limestone road and she at the other, with her great basket on her arm.

When all the workers had dispersed, Hugh O'Dowla locked up the dairy, and, going into the kitchen, found Molly blinking at the furze fire beside Mrs. O'Fenton.

"Well, young masther, you ought to be tired after yer day! Oant you sit down?" said Mrs. O'Fenton.

"No, ma'am," replied Hugh. "I'm thinking about this young girl here. Isn't she better go home?"

Molly cast a reproving glance at him. He should have reserved that topic for discussion in private. But he had made up his mind to accompany her home; and Hugh could be obstinate when he desired to carry out a plan conducive to his own ease. He shrank from his responsibility as guardian *de son tort*, and was anxious to transfer her to her legal custodians. Mrs. O'Fenton agreed with Hugh and urged the girl to go home.

"I thought you were goin' to confession?" exclaimed Molly archly.

"So I am," he replied, "I have plenty of time. Half-an-hour to your place, half-an-hour back here, quarter of an hour on Rose's back into Gallowglass. I'll be home at eight, an' confessions'll be going on till after ten o'clock."

Molly consented, and, wrapped in a shawl of Mrs. O'Fenton's, which she accepted under protest, she set off across the fields with Hugh O'Dowla. The sky was cloudy; and, as it was two miles to Carew's house even by the shortest cut, they went over all that had happened to Molly from the time they had parted in the small

hours of the morning until they had met at dinner. And it was then for the first time, in the silent darkness of the fields, that Hugh realised why Edward O'Brile had gone out to Brady's Wood. And he was smitten anew with remorse for having neglected his friend.

Speaking on the impulse of the moment, he said: "The first thing I'll do when I get home is to prove to the police that Eddie knows nothing about the murder, and explain why he went to Brady's Wood."

Molly stopped abruptly, and, laying her hand on his shoulder, said: "Do it if you like, Hugh. But, if you do, they'll arrest yerself, an' once you're in the bobbies' grips you'll have to tell everything, an' then, then you'll be an informer!"

Hugh remained silent, so thunderstruck by her objection that for a while he could not utter a syllable, knowing, as he did, that no greater disgrace could befall an Irishman, in the estimation of Gallowglass, than to sink to the degradation of becoming an "informer."

As they walked through the wholesome perfumes of the night in that dry upland countryside, Hugh's wits could devise no other solution of the difficulty than that offered by confession.

"If they find Neptune's body, I'm done for," he said gloomily.

"If the sky falls we'll ketch larks," said Molly. "The dog's body can't be found where I heaved it. But if it was left where you put it first, you'd be in gaol be this. 'Tis you an' not me Drydoss would be comin' after to Garekiln. Whin am I to see y' again?"

"To-morrow, if you like. I'll be in the fort at twelve o'clock when they're all at last mass," Hugh replied, squeezing her hand. "I'll go to first mass."

"I may as well be dead as 'ithout you now," she said with a sigh. "I'll promise to be there if 'twas rainin' thunder an' lightnin', cats an' dogs." They were now near Carew's house.

Acting on Hugh's suggestion, Molly remained outside in the dark, while he went in to make smooth the way with Mrs. Carew. Raising the latch, without knocking,

he entered the kitchen and found that muscular woman washing. Her arms were bare to the vaccination mark and Hugh felt somewhat alarmed at the size of them, especially when it occurred to him that, in a certain contingency, the possessor of them might become his mother-in-law. Half-a-dozen young Carews stood or sat upon the settle, while two babies wallowed on the earthen floor, and each child inserted two, three, or four fingers into its mouth to enable it to bear up under the shock given to its nerves by the stranger's arrival. Being something of a connoisseur, Hugh O'Dowla felt that the raw material, out of which the incomparable Molly was created, was, perhaps, too superabundant to be valuable; but the generosity of youth quickly brushed such considerations aside, and he determined to concentrate all his powers on winning over Mrs. Carew for her daughter's sake. He did not find it a difficult task, for she and her husband had always been on excellent terms with him. She was anxious to recover her child, and readily consented to pardon her, delighted at Hugh's assurance that she was unhurt.

"She slept in the barn at Garekiln," said Hugh, letting off his first carefully-prepared lie with forced buoyancy of spirit.

"May be so, may be so, sir," said Mrs. Carew, blowing her nose in her check apron, an occurrence which jarred on that sense of personal nicety which Hugh had learned to cultivate from his brother Ignatius. And she added irrelevantly: "Me people wor all farmers, an' I kem down in the world when I married a man workin' for wages, even af his impliyer was a lord inself."

"I respect you as much as the highest lady in the land," said Hugh.

"The raison I says so, sir, is to show y' that Moll should get fair play. I oant hear nothin' from herself. She's is proud is Lucifer. Me childerr'll tell their mind to every other sthroller that passes the way, but nayther me nor Willum never gets a word out of 'em, oany whin they wants vittles. An' thin never fear they're niizy enuf, the good-for-nothin' pack."

Mrs. Carew was raising her voice, for she saw a little boy, who stood near the cupboard, scooping bits out of a fresh loaf with his dirty fingers.

"Gerr-our-attt, ye cobberra!"[19] cried she, slapping the child on the poll with her open hand and sending him reeling across the floor, till he fell into one of the ruts excavated by the scraping of the hens, and occasionally used as a swimming bath for the accommodation of ducklings just out of the shell.

Hugh was startled, and felt that he would not like to become a member of Mrs. Carew's family.

"Poor Molly is very sorry," he said. "She was at Garekiln all the day, cutting sheaves, an' when the slinjers[20] left she was throwing from the rick. But for her, we couldn't have finished at all. Here's two shillings for her day's work, ma'am. 'Tis double wages, but we were in a pinch an' she deserves it."

"They's a few more days due to her, but I'm waitin' till 'tis worth while an' I'll take it out in goods in the shop," said Mrs. Carew. "'Tis at O'Brile's I dales, as a general rule."

"I'll pay it to you now. How much is it?" asked Hugh, seizing on what he believed to be an excellent means of softening the housewife's heart. He exhibited the bundle of bank-notes with some ostentation, and Mrs. Carew was deeply impressed by the sight. The young Carews stood around gaping like calves, and while Mrs. Carew calculated the sum due to her, Hugh suffered his eyes to rest on them. The family likeness was phenomenal. Three of the female youngsters were incipient Mollys, exact reproductions of their elder sister.

A loud snore from the large wooden bed behind the dresser caused Hugh to start.

"'Tis Willum!" said Mrs. Carew. "He'll have to be up all night at the misthuss's, so he's takin' a doze. He was goin' to bate young O'Brile in the Main Street to-day, but Mr. O'Brile proved sich a good frind to the misthuss in her trouble that he changed his mind. I med him set into the dunkey butt and brought him home. Ah, Mister Kew, we hev a good master lost this day, God

help us." And Mrs. Carew had recourse to her apron again.

Hugh was startled anew at learning that Edward O'Brile's name was coupled slanderously with Molly's, but he was resolved not to speak about the murder. "I hope William will never again beat Molly," he said fervently.

"Af he waits till I axes him, she'll never be hot again," said Mrs. Carew, naming the sum due to her by John O'Dowla, which Hugh paid over to her without questioning the amount.

Thrusting her hand into her bosom, she produced a small calico bag into which she dropped the money; then, drawing the running string tight, she replaced it again near her warm heart.

Hugh then left the house and told Molly that her path had been made easy; and, when they had gone through the business of their real parting in the dark, he led her into the kitchen, where they formally said "Good-night" in the presence of the mother, whose joy was heartfelt at receiving back her one lost ewe lamb.

[1] Generous, freehanded. [2] The master. [3] Poor wretch. [4] Woman of the house. [5] Little man. [6] Hugh O'Dowla and Mary Carew are courting. [7] Samuel Lover. [8] A tramp labourer, a migrating harvester. [9] A beautiful girl indeed. [10] Yes, indeed. [11] Samuel Lover. [12] Fool. [13] Simpleton. [14] I'm dead from you! [15] Drink at the door, parting glass. [16] Boys. [17] Summonses. [18] Suspenders. [19] A precocious brat. [20] Shirkers.

CHAPTER XVI

"The senses are like the sun. The sun makes the heavens invisible and the earth clear; the senses obscure heavenly things and open up earthly ones."—BACON'S APOTHEGMS.

WHILE those events had been occurring at Garekiln, Edward O'Brile lay in the constabulary lock-up at Gallowglass. Thomas O'Brile had consented, with some reluctance, to the proposal made by his son and endorsed by his wife, that Hugh O'Dowla's part in the transactions of the previous night should not be disclosed. And there were few, if any, other parents in Gallowglass who would have acted with such fine consideration for a neighbour's child and such brave indifference to local opinion.

The Sub-Inspector of Police having returned from the scene of the murder, it was decided to take Edward before Mr. Benmore, D.L., the distiller, who was the nearest magistrate. Walking between his father and mother, the young man was escorted down the Main Street by two policemen. It was a trying ordeal, and as they walked along the crowded street, Mrs. O'Brile kept saying the Litany of Loretto to herself.

The shortest way to Riviera House lay across the distillery yard, in passing through which they met Mr. M'Cameron, the operative distiller, a Scotchman, and one of the few Presbyterians in the town.

"Yer son's innocent, Mesthur O'Brile," said the Perthshire man. "It's a sair besness, but the mon's deid an' thar's an end o't."

Mr. O'Brile was a large customer of Messrs. Benmore & Son's, and, on that account, the party received a cordial welcome at Riviera House.

"Good morrow, Tom; good morrow, Mrs. O'Brile," said the Deputy-Lieutenant, bustling into his study,

shaking hands with them and waving them to their seats. He shook his head as he looked towards Edward : " Oh, indeed, I heard about this, I heard about this ! "

Then, turning to the Head Constable, he told M'Petty to set forth the circumstances of the charge.

" What were you doing in Brady's Wood at that hour of the morning, sir ? " asked Mr. Benmore in his severest manner, when the policeman's statement had concluded.

" I went out there for a certain reason," replied Edward, blushing, " and I happened to meet Molly Carew there ; and, while we were talking, the police came up. They told me Mr. Culvert had been murdered and they arrested me. They tried to arrest her but didn't succeed."

Mr. Benmore saw that young O'Brile was innocent of all complicity in the crime. " Tut, tut, M'Petty," he said, " the boy must be released at once. It is as clear as noonday that—pooh ! pooh ! I'll say no more. You know what I mean, Tom. I'll take your own bail for his appearance before the magistrates at Petty Sessions. I couldn't think of— Look, Mrs. O'Brile, I sincerely sympathise with you. But things might be worse. It was a young man's fancy lightly turning to love, as Shakespeare says, that woke this *mauvais sujet* out of his bed so early this morning."

The policemen laughed, but the O'Briles looked sad and serious.

" Youth," said the distiller, " take my advice and don't do your courting out of doors between sunset and sunrise. If you want a girl, go and court her honestly, under her mother's roof. I'm not a saint or a Pharisee, but that's my advice to you."

Mrs. O'Brile blushed, but her eye met the magistrate's fearlessly ; and, with lips compressed and toes beating on the carpet, she endeavoured to convey to the company by her demeanour that she knew more than she was at liberty to reveal.

" Are you filling much of the new, this season, Tom ? " asked Mr. Benmore with an air of confidential gravity.

" Twenty hogsheads, sir ! " replied Mr. O'Brile, who did a large family trade in Gallowglass whisky.

"We finished our first period yesterday," said the distiller, "an' for forty years I never smelled or tasted better. You could sell it as it ran out of the spirit safe in the run room. It was sound, clean, sweet, nutty, and a fair strength. What more could you ask? M'Cameron never saw better."

"I'm not much of a judge compared to Mr. M'Cameron, sir," replied Mr. O'Brile.

"You may take my word of honour for it," replied Mr. Benmore.

"So I do, your honour. 'Twas always the best of whisky. My customers like it better than the Dublin."

"Good-bye!" said Mr. Benmore, shaking hands with them all. "This is only a bagatelle, a mere bottle of smoke. And as for this awful murder, no Gallowglass man did it, that's certain. Least of all," pointing to Edward, "this young gentleman here! I'm sure there will be no further proceedings in this case. Good-bye! Good-bye!"

"Where can Hugh O'Dowla be?" was the question which puzzled the O'Briles, while they lingered on the steps of Riviera House until the policemen had disappeared, Edward's spirits rising at his restoration to liberty. As they walked homewards, they bade good-morrow to John O'Dowla, who was standing at his own door, but they only received a curt nod from that wise man, who looked with disfavour, *prima facie*, on all persons in trouble.

On returning to their shop, Mr. and Mrs. O'Brile soon became conscious that their business was by no means as brisk as it should have been, and that there were only a few customers when, in the ordinary course, there should not have been standing room in the shop.

Edward's first thought was of Hugh. Where could he be? Why did he not show himself in the street? He stood at his father's door and looked down towards O'Dowla's house, and the neighbouring shopkeepers pointed him out to their customers as a youthful profligate whose behaviour had scandalised the town.

The country gentlemen, who came into town in numbers during the day, were thunderstruck by the murder. Many

of them said, "God knows whose turn it will be next!" and for the first time they felt uneasy in the Main Street of Gallowglass.

"Those Irish dogs should be kept to heel and well whipped. Well whipped, I say," exclaimed Colonel Tirrany, one of that numerous class of landlords who regarded the Irish Catholics as inferior animals.

"You have over-whipped them, sir," said Mr. Benmore. "You can over-whip a pack until you make them wicked and cowardly."

The old landlord looked scornfully at the distiller and said: "Oh, is that you, Benmore? What's the price of grains[1] to-day?"

And the assembled toadies burst into loud laughter at the old aristocrat's sally.

"I'm not ashamed of my trade, Colonel Tirrany," retorted the distiller hotly. "It would be more pertinent to ask, What price landlords to-day?"

William Carew had come into town to obtain necessaries for the Culvert household, but the shopkeepers refused to execute his orders. Sawnuch would not supply him with meat. Neither would O'Pollards supply groceries, nor would Sporeen give mourning stuffs and housekeeper's sundries. Thomas O'Brile happened to meet him just as he was shamefacedly getting into his empty jennet trap, and the man complained of the treatment he had experienced.

"The master's word was good for a thousand pounds yesterday but to-day they'd let his wife an' childern starve, so the' would, in Gallowglass," he said irritably. "I'm sorry for your own trouble too, sir," he added quietly.

"They won't starve, if I can help it," said Mr. O'Brile. "Although Mr. Culvert never dealt at my shop, an' he owed me money, not for goods sold, but for a loan advanced on account of next year's wool." He led the way to his shop and supplied Carew with all he required, and even succeeded in surreptitiously procuring for him the commodities which he did not happen to sell. And he enjoined it upon William Carew not to tell Mrs. Culvert

what had happened, lest the knowledge that so much antipathy existed towards her might be more than she could bear; so that the ladies at the Hall were left in ignorance of the fact that they were indebted to Mr. O'Brile not only for their meals, but for all the goods they received that day.

During the forenoon many messengers had been arriving with letters for Mrs. Culvert requiring an immediate answer, and which, on being opened, were found to contain John O'Dowla's, Sporeen's, Sawnuch's, O'Pollards', and many other statements of accounts.

Thomas O'Brile's exceptional and chivalrous behaviour involved serious risks to himself. Observant eyes had watched him, and the town gossips quickly disseminated what he had done, colouring the transaction to his disadvantage. Those shopkeepers who had declined to serve Culvert's messenger were particularly wroth with him. In the parlance of Gallowglass, he had made himself "very unpopular in the town," and it would not be forgotten for him.

While Mr. O'Brile was thus charitably occupied, Edward, whose thoughts were bent on discovering Hugh O'Dowla, was strolling in the direction of John O'Dowla's house.

Being market day, every inch of the roadway was lined with butts,[2] backed heels-in against the kerbstones; the horses, with the bits out of their mouths, eating the hay or clover thrown before them on the road. All the yards also were full of carts and every stable crowded with horses. Barley was being purchased by the distillery, the provincial brewers and the local maltster who acted for Guinness's. Though times were bad, money was momentarily plentiful, and, as the afternoon wore on, whisky and porter were consumed in enormous quantities by the dinnerless countrymen, as befitted the inhabitants of a barley-growing district.

"Sure a drunken year is always a prosperous year, d'ye see?" said Wegless, the publican. "People can't take a drop adout money. D'ye see that now?"

Dozens of comfortable, middle-aged farmers' wives, arrayed in their superabundant, hooded, cloth cloaks,

their fresh faces set in white frilled muslin caps, were walking up and down in groups, passing into and coming out of the shops; some retired within the folds of their prodigal garments, others with the hoods thrown back showing the quilted satin lining, and the snow-white cap.

The murder of the Agent did not interfere with the progress of the market, except in so far as it afforded an exciting topic of conversation. None of the usual signs of mourning were visible in the Main Street of Gallowglass, where it was the custom, as it is in all Irish towns, to put up one or more shutters on the shop windows when a neighbour died, even when the deceased was no relative by blood or marriage; the number of shutters being in proportion to the social standing of the departed. The death of an important shopkeeper, for instance, or a large farmer who was well known in the town, would be commemorated by a general mourning represented by three shutters, while the shops owned by the next-of-kin would be altogether closed; and other shops, on terms of particular intimacy with the deceased, would put up all their shutters. If a person of less importance died, one or two shutters would be the measure of the town's mourning. But if some insignificant mortal passed away, his death would be noticed only by his relatives, and the community would take no cognisance of the event.

To-day none of the leading shops, except O'Brile's, displayed a shutter. Thomas O'Brile had ordered two shutters to be put up, and two or three of the minor shops, which belonged to Episcopalian Protestants, displayed a single shutter each. Thus the death of the Agent only evoked as much mourning as would in ordinary times be accorded to a common working-man; whereas if such an event had happened three years previously, in the reign of Mr. De Racques, every shutter in the town would have been put up, all the blinds drawn in the upper windows, and no man's voice would have been raised above a whisper.

Nothing could more perfectly exemplify the suddenness and completeness of the revolution which had taken place. The landlords had ceased to inspire terror and had lost

public respect, which, though they did not seem to recognise it, was the foundation on which all their power rested.

Beggars from Mahernacrow were plying their trade in the street without restriction, some relying on the display of physical infirmities to excite pity, blind men led by dogs or by their ragged wives, cripples hobbling on crutches, wretches afflicted with palsy, hunchbacks, men who had lost an arm or a leg, all were there ; others bawling forth their demands in the name of God and the Blessed Virgin, praying aloud and cursing under their breath when their entreaties were unsuccessful. Others played the Irish bag-pipes, or the fiddle, while another section, with printed ballads for sale, sang doggerels without air, or rhyme, or reason :

> " Blow the winds, hey ho !
> A-rovin' I will go.
> No more I'll tile on English sile,
> So let the music play, I hay !
> I'm off on the mornin' thrain
> To cross the ragin' main ;
> I'm takin' a thrip on a Govermint ship
> Tin thousand miles away."

Young girls were to be met with bawling forth nonsense to tickle the ears of the servant boys and induce them to buy their ballads :

> " Runnin' on the railway, toorulooruloo !
> Salt on yer gurnet, how d'ye do ?
> Sugar on yer mackerel, toorulooruloo !
> Would ye buy a box o' matches from a poor ould man ? "

This colony of beggars lived and bred in Mahernacrow, an ancient and decadent town despised by the men of Gallowglass. In bygone days Mahernacrow was a flourishing place, being famous for the excellence of its home-made brogues,[3] and it supplied boots to the entire barony of Killafastare. But the brogue-makers were all gone ; and their descendants, living in ruined cottages for which they paid no rent, now constituted the race of shameless, hereditary mendicants who preyed upon Gallowglass and the surrounding country.

Bugler, who had been fruitlessly searching for Hugh, was forcing his way up the street; knocking against the great baskets carried on the arms of the country women, in which eggs, butter, or fowls had been brought to market and in which the week's supply of shop goods was now to be taken home. The tall, uncouth young man in his ragged clothes worked his way impatiently onwards with a cynical sneer on his face, jostling the women right and left, like so much useless baggage as he thought them. In his opinion "ould mawths" were mainly useful "for starvin' pups," "frightenin' young horses," "bonin' all the week's wages," and "abusin' porther," a liquor which he considered to be the only unmixed blessing vouchsafed to mankind.

"Well for him!" Bugler, copying his seniors, would say, when he saw a drunken man reeling home. "I wish to God I had the wan half of what porther is inside in him!"

But to-day as he knocked his ribs against the baskets of the "ould mawths," his thoughts were busy with less pleasant topics.

"Ould calls is nearly is bad is ould mawths, begor," muttered Bugler, as he jostled against old Quisk and his crony, old Scarlant, who were both considerably the worse for liquor.

Descrying Edward, Bugler worked his way towards him and made signals by tossing his head upwards, winking his right eye and dragging his mouth over towards his right ear; and Edward stepped forward to meet him.

Bugler, knowing that Edward was innocent, divined that his having gone to Brady's Wood was due to anxiety about Hugh O'Dowla's safety; but, with that tenderness for the feelings of their superiors, so characteristic of Irish peasants, he refrained from asking questions, though his thoughts were full of anxiety for Hugh O'Dowla and of sympathy for the O'Brile family.

"What are you going to do, Dan?" asked Edward O'Brile, using the boy's Christian name as evidence of seriousness; Bugler's full name, by which he was never addressed outside his own family, being Daniel O'Rourke.

" I'm thinkin' o' goin' to look for Masther Hugh. Blast the thing I has to do, sir. I was troubled about yerself too, sir, so I was, fur I guessed what it was that brought y' out to Brady's Wood this mornin'. But I hopes all yer trouble on that score is over now."

O'Rourke was also one of that numerous company of idle young men of all classes to be found in Catholic Ireland whose ill-controlled senses make heaven invisible to them and who constitute one of the greatest of the many evils to which the country is a prey.

" Where can Hugh O'Dowla be ? " asked Edward.

" After that—" But O'Rourke stopped hastily, and added, " that he mightn't get good of her ! I think I'll tell William Carew the truth meself an' get a floggin' for him that he richly deserves."

" Don't, on any account ! " exclaimed Edward.

O'Rourke was a year older than Hugh and Edward. Adversity had so embittered his views of society that he held that human life had no amenities worth mentioning, except the possession of tobacco and porter.

" I'd go through fire an' water for Hugh, an' well he knows it. But I'd heave that M—— I'm glad I'm not 'ithout a smoke anyway," he said, drawing a sigh. " If he'd on'y be said be me, an' be satisfied to lave meself gout to meet her last night ! This mornin' whin I heard about the murder an' all the fuss that was kicked up about yerself and that, that, that— I thought I'd gout o' me mind. For, d'ye see, me mouth was closed ? As the still min said, d'ye see, at breakfast time, if a dozen o' theirselves was suffocated in a back,[4] dickins a hair ud e'er a wan care. But I regards this murder, d'ye see, as outside me altogether. I'm no politeeshan an' 'tis a thing I don't onderstand. I wouldn't kill the gintleman meself, an' if I seen anywan doin' it, I'd stop 'um. But there, d'ye see, I draws me rein. That's my bounds ditch, that's the last drill o' praties in the conacre. He may deserve to be kilt, as some says, or he may not, as others says. I don't calculate or specklate on it at all. But about Masther Hugh, that I've followed since I was born, an' run after his dunkey barefoot leatherin' him for him,

over seven mile o' stony road from here to his Aunt Pinser's place an' back many a time; an' run drags with dead rats an' herrings for his dogs; an' claned his bits and irons for him; an' taught him how to smoke; an' how to drink porther——"

"You know him a long time," said Edward.

"I do, sir. I remimber whin he'd rather have a pinny tart than a glass o' sweetened porther an' rather that rotten stuff called ammin-taffy than a smoke o' tobakky. 'Twas mostly meself that showed him the difference. But, lay me lone, he's gone to the bad lately, an' I traces all of it to that, that—yerra, the Carew heifer. He shouldn't lave you suffer the punishment of his acts though. You're down for it all in the town to-day, an', as 'twas, your father had enough of onpoplarity athout this."

Edward smiled and said: "Hugh is not thoughtful for others. Ease and luxurious living are his ambition."

O'Rourke shook his head up and down, causing his lips to flap. Then he said: "I likes a stretch at me aize, meself, too, 'tis the naturallest position for a man. I often wanders gintlemen wid plinty munny don't stretch at their aize more than they does. There's the yung Benmores an' Portersons that were born up to their chins in sovereigns, they're on their legs from mornin' to night. No sooner is wan thing done than they biggens another with ne'er a stretch or a set down between, the same is if they had it on piece-work. Don't I see every baste in the field stretchin' at his aize all around me? I invies cows, I do faith, they way they lolls in the clover chewin' their cud! You needn't laugh, 'tis God's truth!"

Leaving Bugler in the wool-store—for Thomas O'Brile, amongst his many other speculations, was a large buyer of wool and hides—Edward went into the shop, which he found almost empty, business being practically at a stand-still. His father was away at Ballyglanders; and a loud discussion was going on in which four enormous country-women were engaged. He saw that his mother's face was very flushed, as if she were taking a part in it. Mrs. Carew, he noticed, was one of the disputants. Her appearance was odd, because, though she wore the large black

hooded cloak, she wore no white frilled cap; and her small head, with its straight, smooth, iron-gray hair, and long neck protruding over the ample folds of cloak and hood, gave her that bare aspect so characteristic of the Condor vulture. Her teeth were white and sound. She could speak Irish and English faster than an expert short-hand writer could report, and, in speaking, her tongue was often seen flashing between her teeth like a hound's.

"She is her daughter's mother!" thought Edward.

"I have eleven childern, God bless 'em!" called out Mrs. Carew, in tones loud enough to be heard a furlong off, but which, as all the other women pitched their voices in the same key, excited no comment whatever.

"Why, thin, ma'am?" boomed another enormous woman, who was putting clay pipes and tobacco, small quantities of tea and sugar, laces, starch, blacking, hair oil, and housewife thread into her bosom under her plaid shawl.

"These shmall things must be put up in sayfetty!" she added, as she kept stowing away her breast-cargo. When it was all aboard, she closed the hatches of her shawl over it, like a good stevedore, and roared like the God of Thunder at Mrs. Carew: "I has tin ov 'um meself, six girls an' four boys, God bless 'em, an' two I berrid, the Lord ha' mercy on 'em! But I knows they're in Heaven!"

"I buried ne'er a wan," shrieked Mrs. Carew, "but I may say they's wan o' mine dead now. Ooh, oo-oo! An', more be token, but for Mr. Culvert that's dead I'd never have axed Willum to bate her. The poor masther seen her on the roads late an' sphoke to meself kindly. An' whin the masther shpoke ti me about her, I couldn't lave it pass no longer! Sure I couldn't, could I?"

"He met with a fearful death, God bless us!" cried a tall, pale woman, whose left cheek was bulged out with the money she had just received for her eggs.

"Don't cry, Mrs. Carew, don't cry, ma'am!" said Mrs. O'Brile. "In a few days' time, 'twill all come right. There's no harm done. My son is as innocent as the babe unborn, and I'm sure your daughter is the same.

Take my word for it! What are they but children? Have a drop o' brandy, ma'am?"

"Have ye me shtockin's med yet? I want me shtockin's! I want me shtockin's!" cried a burly old man, bursting into the shop and pushing the women to right and left. "'Tis fitter for ye to be makin' me shtockin's than to be idlin' here. I want me shtockin's."

"Oh, good day, Mr. Mulnane, they'll have to give you yer shtockin's," said Mrs. O'Brile, laughing.

"Begannies, we won't," shrieked the pale woman, "lave his daughter knit 'em for him." And a loud roar of laughter arose from the group of women.

Old Mulnane was a retired blacksmith whose wife had long been dead, having left him in possession of seven muscular sons who were accounted the strongest men in the barony. His standing joke was that he had neither wife nor daughter to knit his stockings for him; and, on fair and market days, when under the influence of drink, he was to be heard roaring for his stockings up and down the street, seizing the women and girls, tickling them on the busts and armpits and demanding his stockings.

"Go home at wanst an' knit me shtockin's, ye sluts!" he said. Then turning to Mrs. O'Brile, "Gi' me half drap!"

On receipt of half-glass of whisky from the clerk, he swallowed it raw and betook himself off to pursue his quest for stockings.

"God be with ould times!" said the woman with the breast load. "The poor man is thinkin' o' the days of his youth whin the girls used to knit the shtockin's for their sweethearts, an' it wasn't everywan who could afford or who wanted to wear shtockin's thin. Thim wor the days o' lawn a vawlya." [5]

"The girls that's goin' now are very different," said Mrs. Carew, wiping her eyes with her great check apron, and Mrs. O'Brile put a glass of spirits on the counter before her.

"Af you'd say a pather an' ave, or a rosary, or go the round o' the stations o' the Cross—" said one of the mothers sympathetically.

" 'Tis what I'm thinkin' o' doin', ma'am, is to get Canon O'Grauver to say a mass for her ! " screamed Mrs. Carew ; and, looking at the brandy, she added irrelevantly : " I never had a docthor nor a nuss in me life, nor no wan to do nothin' for me, nor I never lost a day in bed in me life, oany wan wid every child, that's eleven days ! Molly is me third an' all the rest is is good is gold ! "

" You med a mistake to marry a Prodestun ! " roared the pale woman. " But, sure, you minds your rilligious duty yerself, I spose." And she went on counting her money. " Hane, doa, thray, ca-hir, koo-ig, shay, shocht, hucht, nay, the, hane-dee-og, doa-dee-og, &c.," as if she had lost all interest in the discussion.

" Good day to ye all ! Good-bye, Mrs. O'Brile ! " cried the big woman, who, having crossed her body shawl over her breast-cargo and knotted the ends tightly at the small of her back, was ready to start on a nine-mile drive to her home—that is, ready to start as soon as she could find her husband.

The pale woman went on counting her money : " Thray-dee-og, cahir-dee-og, kooig-dee-og, shay-dee-og, shocht-dee-og,-hucht-dee-og, nay-dee-og, fihih," making a pound stack of the silver when she reached *fihih* or twenty.

Edward O'Brile, having had his dinner, carried a plate of roast beef, potatoes and cabbage and a pint of porter to Bugler in the wool-store, who thanked him with an avalanche of grateful flattery. Edward learned from Bugler that Hugh had gone to Garekiln early in the fore-noon to superintend the threshing, and they at once decided to go out to the farm in search of him.

" Gone," exclaimed Edward, " without as much as asking for myself ! And he saw me entering the barrack hand-cuffed ! "

" Neptune is not in the stable," said O'Rourke, " nor anywhere about the yard ! "

Edward O'Brile's usually sanguine temperament was depressed. He had trusted to Hugh O'Dowla's supposed magnanimity to come forward and relieve him from the aspersion cast upon his character in connection with Molly Carew, and he had been disappointed. He now realised that

the reflection on his own character could not fail to add to the already numerous embarrassments of the O'Briles. It was obvious that their customers were beginning to boycott them. The burning of the hay at Ballyglanders was evidently malicious and involved a loss of several hundred pounds. Thomas O'Brile had bought it in lots from surrounding farmers, who were compelled by the stress of the times to take the unusual course of selling their hay, and he counted on disposing of it in the late spring at a high price as seasoned fodder for race-horses and hunters. There was no ostentatious affection between Thomas O'Brile and his son, but Edward loved his father, who rarely asked him to do anything in the nature of work, supplied him liberally with clothes and pocket-money, and never interfered with his freedom of action. Indeed Edward laboured under the disadvantage of being a spoiled only son, but the companionship of his sisters had prevented his good nature from being seriously impaired by parental indulgence.

"What a nice priest Hugh would make!" said Edward lightly.

"Oh, wouldn't he?" replied Bugler. "'Tis the talk o' the town that Father O'Darrell 'ud give his eyes to get him, in order to make sure of ould Miss Pinser's munny."

"There's nothing in that," said Edward. "The pastor has made a desperate attempt to catch myself for the same meritorious object."

"I wonder 'ud he take meself?" said Bugler. "Begor, I knows no life shupayrior to a priest's. The best of everythin', atin', drinkin' an' shmokin', everywan afraid of 'em, even the big fellas theirselves. They has nc'er a wife an' childerr to bother 'em, an' shtill an' all they're not athout faymale society, fur you'll never see wan of 'em 'ithout a fine girl walkin' or drivin' with him. Begor, af his raverince axed me I'd jump at th' offer."

Edward laughed and said: "You're a heretic, Dan."

"No," said Bugler, blushing, "I bleeves they has some kind o' supernatural power. They're the Lord's anointed, as me mawth says. But sure I sees fellas that's not much betther nor meself becomin' priests nowadays. Af *their*

nature is changed 'tis no great sin to say me own might be changed also. Is it, sir ? "

" No ; Father O'Darrell told my mother that they find it most difficult to get respectable boys, that is to say, boys of my own station, to become priests now. I know that every respectable boy in the Diocesan Seminary was solicited to become a theological student and mostly all refused. I know also that many of the fellows in the rhetoric class[6] were boys who had free places. The priests used to make us all tipsy on Patrick's Day, an' I used to notice they took more trouble to get Hugh to take drink on such occasions than they did with any other boy. Their pets used to be blind drunk and then they used to laugh at 'em an' get 'em into their power."

" 'Twouldn't surprise me then if Hugh became a priest. He's quair in many ways in himself. Sure, Sporeen's sister that intered the convent last spring was afther jiltin' or bein' jilted, which comes to the same thing, eight or nine times ! " said Bugler meditatively.

" Hugh will never become a priest, after last night ! My mother said so," replied Edward.

" I dunno," said Bugler ; " I wouldn't put anythin' apast him. I never seen a fella that suffers so much remorse. The bit o' divilmint he goes in for is no value to him, for he pays for it on the threble. I don't b'lieve in dissipatin' af you can't do it wid an aisy mind."

Thus conversing they made their way to Garekiln with the object of finding Hugh O'Dowla. It was dark when they reached the farm, having met Arnill and his wife on the road.

" He's just gone," said Mrs. O'Fenton.

" He can't be gone for good, ma'am," said Bugler, " for the mare is in the stable."

" He'll be back in half-an-hour," she replied reluctantly. " He's gone across to William Carew's on some business."

The young men decided to follow him and set off by the short cut across the fields with which O'Rourke was well acquainted.

" He may pass us in the dark," suggested Edward.

" No fear," said Bugler. " Hugh might, but Neptune

oant. Nep 'ud shmell meself a quarter of a mile away an' make for me."

Bugler little knew that he was destined never again to behold Neptune, but it would have seemed to him a thousand-fold more incredible if anyone had told him that he was never more to meet Neptune's master.

They reached Carew's house soon after Hugh and Molly had entered it together, and they determined to wait for some minutes on the roadside, being convinced that Hugh must be within the dwelling. A low whistle sounded down the road in the direction which led away from Gallowglass, and the young men rushed off in answer to the summons, hoping to discover that it had emanated from Hugh. Looking back when about a hundred yards away, they saw Carew's door opening, and in the stream of light which projected into the darkness they beheld Hugh emerging from the house.

They whistled and called as they retraced their steps; but, the wind being adverse, Hugh O'Dowla did not hear them and he disappeared into the shadows of the night.

[1] Distillery offal. Colonel Tirrany was one of the "small gentry" whose ancestors in the eighteenth century are described by Mr. Lecky as "a harsh, rapacious, and dissipated class, living with an extravagance that could only be met by the most grinding exactions, and full of the pride of race and of the pride of creed." Arthur Young says: "A landlord in Ireland can scarcely invent an order which a servant, labourer, or cotter dares to refuse to execute." Wakefield says that, in 1809, he "saw a poor man's cheek laid open by the stroke of a whip. The inhuman wretch who inflicted the wound was a gentleman of some rank in the country." The poor man "was standing in his way, and he struck him with less ceremony than an English squire would a dog." —*History of Ireland in Eighteenth Century*, vol. i. pp. 284-286.

[2] Short carts as distinguished from long cars.

[3] Heavy boots.

[4] A fermenting vat.

[5] Full and plenty.

[6] The class reserved for boys preparing for the priesthood.

CHAPTER XVII

"There has been no scene seen under the sun like Ireland for these eight years."

—CARLYLE'S *Cromwell.*

HUGH O'DOWLA drew a breath of relief when he found himself in the dark, alone with the watery south wind, and, taking off his hat, he cooled his heated forehead and burning cheeks against the atmosphere. He suddenly resolved to travel on foot by the highroad to Gallowglass instead of returning across the fields to Garekiln and completing the journey on horseback. The bleak country road had less terrors for him than the wet fields. He rushed away from Carew's house, turned up his coat collar, replaced his hat and, breaking into a run, dashed forward through the mist, like one who had got rid of some painful burden. The sky was lowering ominously and the wind was in his face; but, when he had gone a short distance he became conscious of footsteps following him quickly. At first he thought they were the echoes of his own, but a little attention convinced him that the footfalls were those of people who were running like himself. Was not that a whistle? They were following him!

He had now left Carew's house behind, and the lights of some farmsteads could be discerned gleaming like beacons, for the candle is always placed close inside the window-panes and there are no blinds, each house with its out-offices and ricks of hay and corn forming a small colony at the end of its own private boreen; but the nearest labourer's cottage on the roadside was a mile away. It was very dark between the high, unclipped hedges of whitethorn, and remembering his quarrel with Donoghue and his hints to Quisk and Scarlant, it occurred to him that the men who killed Mr. Culvert would not hesitate to take Hugh O'Dowla's life.

"I'll run for my life," he said, and he bounded along the road as fast as most horses could trot.

The noise of the pursuing footsteps died away, but he indistinctly heard whistles and cries, which only served to accelerate his flight. The road now lay along a gradual incline terminating at the old graveyard of Kilderriheen-breeka, the burial-place of many Gallowglass families, including the O'Dowlas. When he came to the by-road leading up to the cemetery, he slackened his pace to a walk; but suddenly a man sprang out from the dyke and seized him by the throat, and Hugh O'Dowla, already exhausted, lost consciousness from the shock.

When he awoke he found himself lying on his back on the earthen floor of a dark chamber or cavern, lighted by the fitful flicker of a candle on the wall. He discerned several men in the cavern, some seated on a long wooden settle, others standing near the sconce.

Sitting up, he implored them to tell him where he was.

'You'll soon know all you're ever likely to know," said a strange man who stood in the centre of a group gathered round a smouldering log in a distant recess. It was the same voice that he had heard at the kiln, the tones of which he would never forget.

He rose to his feet and saw that all the men wore small masks; but, as his eyes became accustomed to the gloom, he began to distinguish outlines and thought he recognised some of the men seated on the settle. Staggering across towards them, he found he had surmised correctly, for there were Donoghue Spilltan, Dick Quisk, and Moss Scarlant; wearing masks that concealed the eyes and nose, it is true, but to Hugh's sharp eye, as plainly recognisable as if their faces were uncovered.

"Donoghue," cried Hugh, "is that you? Oh! won't you speak to me?" But Donoghue only stared at him through his mask and was silent.

"Dick Quisk! Moss Scarlant! You won't let me be killed in cold blood, will you?" he went on imploringly. But no one spoke in reply.

At a preconcerted signal two men approached Hugh and seized him, while two others drew dirks from their breast

pockets and held them with the points close to his breast. The distracted boy thought his last hour had come; and, in his despair, he began mechanically to recite the Act of Contrition. He wept convulsively and the tears gave him relief.

"Citizens," said the voice of the stranger, "this man, under rule 43, has forfeited his life by his acts this minute, so he has, even if his conduct earlier in the day hadn't marked him out imperatively for removal."

"That's so," exclaimed several men in chorus.

"Remove him," cried the wild voice of a second stranger—the man who had been addressed as "O'Grogan" in Brady's Wood on the night of the murder.

"Listen here, y' unfortunate man!" said the stranger, addressing Hugh. "Your life is twice forfeited to yer country, so it is, an' her holy cause. First, because from certain words you're after lettin' fall to-day, it is clearly dangerous to Ireland that you should continue to live. It is the duty of every Irishman to die for Ireland, of course, an', in sacrificin' you, we're only enablin' you to die for Ireland's good. In the second place, your conduct in recognisin', or, at all events, in attemptin' to recognise, three citizens here this evening, empowers us, under rule 43, to decree instant death for you. Have you anything to say why you shouldn't die?"

The question, revealing as it did the possibility of still saving his life, acted like a stimulant on Hugh O'Dowla, and he answered: "Yes, for I might have told all I knew to the police, but I didn't. I had already made up my mind that I would never disgrace my name by becoming an informer."

A rustle passed through the assemblage and O'Rylan drew a long breath; for the inspiring genius of the Gallowglass Valiants was none other than our acquaintance from Dreg Street.

O'Rylan, who had been so humble and of such small account in presence of "the Boss" and the other great men at the Valiants' Council in Dublin, was a star of the first magnitude here, being the conduit-pipe through whom the Boss's great ideas filtered down to Gallowglass. He

seemed to have grown in bulk and stature as well as in importance. He had been in hiding in this subterranean chamber since the commission of the murder, and intended to remain there until some new crime elsewhere distracted public attention.

This cavern was a branch of an immense labyrinth of caves which undermined the country for several miles and which had never been thoroughly explored. Many secret societies in olden times had held their meetings there. The 'forty-eight men and the 'sixty-seven men were in the habit of assembling there, and latterly the Valiants had been using it. The principal entrance to the cave was in the graveyard, but there were several exits in different parts of the country, from any of which, in the event of pursuit, escape could easily be secured. Trouble with the police was not anticipated, though it was provided against. As it was impossible for a detective to work in a neighbourhood like Gallowglass, where every newcomer was a marked man whose movements were closely watched, and as the local police were all known and it was useless for them to attempt to pose as detectives in civilian disguise, the native informer was the only medium through which the Government could discover a political crime. The promoters of such associations as the Society of Valiants were well aware of this, and relied upon their own immunity from punishment with well-founded assurance. They took ample precautions against informers, first, in the mystery with which they veiled their own identity, second, in the terror which they inspired into their dupes ; and furthermore they reckoned on the ingrained antipathy to informers which possessed the public mind from time immemorial in Ireland.

It was O'Rylan who had been pursued by Hugh on the night of the murder, and it was by him Neptune had been killed ; but the Dreg Street man did not recognise young O'Dowla now. None of those present knew positively that Hugh had witnessed the murder. Molly had been suspected, owing to her having been found in the wood by the police ; but Edward O'Brile's capture in company with her seemed to explain her presence in that vicinity.

The conspirators concluded that the young couple had met there by appointment; and, if they had known anything of the murder, they would not have made the wood their *rendezvous* after the tragedy had been enacted.

But Hugh's hints to the three accomplices in the haggard, accompanied by looks full of meaning, could not be explained on any hypothesis; and therefore, when Quisk, Scarlant, and Donoghue had brought the news from the threshing, his seizure had been decreed. Hugh had been tracked from the moment he and Molly had parted from Mrs. O'Fenton until he had been captured. Had his timidity not urged him to fly from the sound of his friends' footsteps, immediately after leaving Carew's house, he would have escaped capture that night; for the Society would not have assailed him in presence of two witnesses.

The men crowded up curiously on hearing Hugh's words, and a momentary silence ensued.

"Is that a fact?" said the stranger, after a while. "Mind, we know what you know, but, to test yer sincerity, I command you now to tell everything you know. Go on, d'ye know anything?"

Hugh narrated how and why he had gone to Brady's Wood, what he had seen there, whom he had recognised, and how he had left it, explaining also how Edward O'Brile and Molly happened to be there at the same time.

"The grabber's son an' the girl must be removed," said O'Grogan, in a threatening voice, brandishing a dagger.

"Wait a while!" interposed Quisk.

"O'Brile knows nothing whatever about it," said Hugh, "and as for her, she would die rather than inform. I'll answer for her with my own life. It was she who convinced me of the treachery of informing!"

"I bleeves in her!" cried the voice of Quisk. "Rimimber what I toult ye, about the bobbies at Garekiln to-day. She's game! I bleeves in her!"

"Is that a fact?" exclaimed O'Rylan. "But, whisht, that can be discussed be the council afterwards. Would

you be prepared, young man, to die yourself if she proved false ? "

" I would," replied Hugh, who began to feel sanguine that all might yet end well. He was still in the custody of his guards, but now, at a sign from O'Rylan, he was forced backwards to a distant corner, and a whispered discussion was held by the others in which Hugh frequently heard the familiar voices of Quisk, Scarlant, and Donoghue intervening.

It seemed to him as if he had been waiting for hours, when at length O'Rylan spoke.

The Irish are naturally actors, for most of them play a treble part in life, the life which they really lead, the life which they picture to the priest in the confessional, and the life which they lead in public. Even when there is no necessity for doing so, the average Irishman feels an inclination to masquerade. David O'Rylan now assumed a theatrical manner and accent, suitable to his position as delegate from headquarters, and exclaimed in melodramatic tones, using the parlance of the secret society : " Bring the hostage forward, citizens ! "

What a pleasurable feeling the exercise of admitted power gives the human mind ! What stratagems will not even the respectable politician have recourse to in order to gain an undisputed pre-eminence in his party ?

It is not difficult to understand, then, the motives which induced men to promote those secret societies, by means of which insignificant people wielded the power of life and death over their superiors. Add to the delights of power, the sanguine hope of immunity from punishment ; and add to both the uplifting consciousness of patriotism, the conviction, which undoubtedly existed in the minds of many members of those secret political societies, that every act done was in the best interests of Ireland and destined to restore freedom and prosperity to their native land ; remembering all this, there is nothing inexplicable in the conduct of the founders and leading spirits of such secret societies as that to which O'Rylan belonged.

" If your life is spared in the hope of serving our beloved country," continued O'Rylan, " and if you are

offered the privilege of joining the Society of Irish Valiants, are you prepared to do so and undertake the responsibility ? Speak ! "

Hugh hesitated so long before replying that O'Rylan exclaimed : " Draw, citizens, and remove this obstacle to our country's freedom ! "

On the instant, a dozen daggers gleamed before Hugh's eyes and the distracted boy cried aloud : " I will join ! I will join ! Spare my life ! I pledge my honour to you, I will be faithful. Don't kill me, for God's sake ! "

O'Rylan raised his hand and said, " Sheath ! "

When the daggers had disappeared, he addressed Hugh and said : " Kneel down, young man ! "

Hugh knelt on the clammy earthen floor.

" Bare his arm ! " said O'Rylan, and instantly Hugh's coat was pulled off and his left shirt sleeve cut open from the shoulder.

" Your life is saved," said O'Rylan, " but we will teach you to bleed for our immortal an' long-suffering country."

Hugh was crying like a girl.

O'Rylan gave a sign, and one of the guards, drawing his dagger lightly across Hugh's arm, opened a few small veins. The operation was painless, but Hugh fainted ; and when he awoke, having been revived by brandy, he saw his arm red with blood. A man was holding a handkerchief to it, evidently not with the intention of staunching the wound, but with the view of saturating the kerchief in the trickling blood until every vestige of the white material had been incarnadined.

" What way are y' ? " said the Dreg Street man in his natural Dublin accent.

Hugh said in a faint voice, " I'm better. Let me go home ! "

But the ordeal of his initiation was far from complete. The shirt sleeve was drawn over his arm and his coat was roughly put on. Then O'Rylan held up the dripping handkerchief, and, resuming his theatrical manner, said : " This is the first blood you were ever privileged to shed in Ireland's holy cause ! "

A blasphemous and blood-curdling oath was administered

HUGH O'DOWLA'S INITIATION

O'Eylau gave a sign, and one of his guards, drawing his dagger lightly across Hugh's arm, opened a few small veins. The operation was painless, but Hugh trembled in

on a book, a crucifix, and a human skull, in which Hugh pledged himself to overturn the British Government in Ireland; to aid in the establishment of an Irish Republic, under the direction of his superiors; to take away human life and to aid in taking it away, when ordered to do so by the council; to keep all proceedings and names connected with the Society inviolably secret even from the priest in confession. To Hugh, as to every one else connected with the Society, all these formalities were intensely impressive. When they had been gone through, he had become a member of a Society whose directors he knew nothing of, and had surrendered all his rights as a free man. For him every detail of the initiation was dreadful, solemn, and serious beyond measure, and he felt himself irrevocably pledged by the oath. There was a "nameless terror," a great secret power, which was popularly supposed to be behind such conspiracies and which rendered them invincible. The members were made to feel that disobedience to the rules would assuredly involve death. And there was a substantial reason for so believing.

Even those who were not at all connected with secret societies were in a state of unreasoning fright at this period, when the mighty were being laid low in more senses than one. It was this intangible fear which compelled men like John O'Dowla, Patrick O'Pollards, Maurice Sawnuch, Wegless, Sporeen and others to tacitly acquiesce in the murder of Mr. Culvert, and which forced them to bow to the stress of an agitation in which they were reluctant to take part. Individuality and strength of character are not common in a country where all moral responsibility is transferred to sacrificing priests who only use the trust reposed in them for the purpose of weakening the characters of their penitents and enhancing the sacerdotal power. Hence it is that the unanimity with which agitations are taken up in Ireland is deceptive, being founded, not on mature judgment and calm deliberation, but rather on hysterical fear and excitement; the multitude not being composed of individuals who are "of one mind," but being rather an unreasoning herd possessing no mind whatever.

Many other blood-curdling formalities having been gone through, O'Rylan, addressing Hugh, said: "Have you any request to make, brother?"

"For God's sake, let me go home," cried the boy; "I fear I am dying!"

Hugh's handkerchief was then solemnly returned to him; he was ordered to place it next to his heart, and the command was obeyed.

"Cheer up! You'll be soon let free!" said O'Rylan. "Remember the manual sign, the facial sign, and the words. And remember that the first time you omit to report yourself, you may regard yourself as a dead man!"

Hugh was then blindfolded and led away. After a quarter of an hour's travelling the bandage was taken off his eyes, his guides vanished, and he found himself again in the dark on the highroad to Gallowglass. He staggered blindly along in the direction in which they had turned his face, but, like a man who has been suddenly awakened in a train, he did not know whither he was going. The road seemed unfamiliar and he stumbled frequently over the broken macadam. He felt certain that he was going away from Gallowglass, and the farther he advanced the more firmly was he convinced that his distance from home was increasing, but he dared not turn back. At length he thought he recognised certain well-known trees and fences, and he began to think that after all he might possibly be going homewards. But still he doubted the evidence of his senses; and it was not until the first gas-lamp of Gallowglass shone on him like a beacon of safety, that he was sure of his whereabouts.

Was the whole occurrence a dreadful dream or phantasmagoria? Was this dear, familiar, flagged sidewalk, and those parallel rows of comfortable cottages, whose windows were radiant with light and warmth, a reality or only a vision of his dreams? He closed his eyes and walked onwards as if unable to decide. His gait was unsteady when he reached his own door, where he beheld his father engaged in gossip with Mr O'Pollards.

John O'Dowla, whose best parental manner was always exhibited in presence of strangers, was effusively glad to

see Hugh. He had already heard from Mrs. Arnill that the rick had been finished; and O'Pollards' presence relieved Hugh from the necessity of answering any embarrassing queries.

"Oh, Hugh, me boy!" exclaimed John O'Dowla, "you must be famished! 'Tis long past nine o'clock. Pup, pup, pup!"

"Nine o'clock!" thought Hugh. "Can it be only two hours and a half since I left Garekiln?"

He felt as if he were several years older since he had seen Darry, the driver, putting out the engine fires. Never before had he been so glad to enter his father's shop, never had the familiar objects around seemed so homelike, nay, so lovely, in his eyes. How glad he was to see the counter that he had occasionally dusted, the three pairs of scales that he had used hundreds of times in serving customers when he was a little boy and, at his own request, had helped in the shop on exceptionally busy days. Many a time had he felt ashamed of these surroundings, as being mean and degrading in contrast with the well-furnished halls and rooms of private houses. Butt o-night he felt he would gladly spend the rest of his life inside the counter, huxtering with the country women about "hansels" [1] and "tillas" [2] and listening to their gossip.

"Excuse me for one instant, sir," said John O'Dowla to Mr. O'Pollards, and, rushing into the shop, the affectionate father cried out: "Mamma, mamma, here's Hugh, get him some tea, an' make it hot, strong an' sweet, if you please, ma'am! Pup, pup, pup!"

Mrs. O'Dowla was never overtly curious about Hugh's doings, being preoccupied with the business of "making her own soul." She had been to confession that evening, and, though she had been vaguely informed by Mrs. Arnill that Hugh had been flirting with Molly at Garekiln, she put no questions to her son as she gave him his tea, having decided that it was her duty rather to report such matters to Father O'Darrell first, and act afterwards as the parish priest might advise her.

"Ask me no questions an' I'll tell you no lies!" was a favourite expression of Mrs. O'Dowla's; and, in her

dealings with her children, she acted up to the spirit of it.

Hugh did not go to confession. He was utterly exhausted, and went to his bedroom as soon as he could get away without exciting Ignatius's suspicion. Neither did he mention that he had sold the colt to M'Gurk. When undressing he casually put his fingers into the vest pocket in which he had placed the bank notes. The money was missing! He searched all his clothes, and, as he did so, the blood-stained kerchief fell upon the carpet. The sight of it drove the loss of the money out of his mind, assuring him, as it did, of the terrible reality of all he had gone through that evening. Then he saw the wound on his arm, to which his shirt sleeve had clung. His heart thumped wildly against his ribs, and, in despair, he blew out the candle and threw himself into bed.

[1] A gift for good luck.
[2] Over-measure, something extra.

CHAPTER XVIII

" Pity ! No, no, you dare not, Priest,—not you, our father, dare
Preach to us now that godless creed—the murderer's blood to
spare."

—Charles Gavan Duffy.

Rain fell heavily throughout Saturday night, as the Darrys had predicted. But Sunday morning dawned fresh and promising, and, at first mass, the aisles and galleries of the commodious, old-fashioned, T-shaped chapel of Gallowglass were packed with people. There were two reasons for the exceptionally crowded attendance. First, there was much curiosity to hear what Father O'Darrell would have to say on the murder. And, secondly, many of those who usually attended last mass, betook themselves to first mass this morning so as to have the rest of the day free to observe the inpouring of the country contingents, the arrival of the leaders, and the marshalling of the hosts at the demonstration to be held at Caherconlish. Open-mouthed. Irish countrymen have such large ears to hear and eyes to see, that those organs never had enough to occupy them in Gallowglass ; except on abnormal occasions such as the arrival of a circus, the opening of a mission by Regular Priests in peculiar costume, the passing of some exceptionally long funeral procession, or the mustering of a great meeting like that which was to assemble in Caherconlish on that day.

Three thousand " good, practical Catholics," therefore, were congregated in Gallowglass chapel on that Sunday morning to marvel at the miracle of Transubstantiation, or, in plain words, the conversion of bread and wine, by the power of Father O'Darrell, into " the body and blood, soul and divinity of God the Son, the Second Person of the Adorable Trinity." The change of the elements having taken place, the sacrifice of God the Son to God the Father

was offered up to the tinkling of bells, the sounding of gongs, the beating of breasts, and the groaning of women and aged men.

People are apt to forget how largely the personal element enters into the performance of those sacrificial functions by the Irish priest. This particular ceremony, for instance, was, it is true, the immolation of Jesus Christ's body and blood on the Gallowglass altar for the appeasement of an enraged omnipotent God. But it was also Father O'Darrell's mass, and to Father O'Darrell belonged the major portion of the glory of the sacred celebration. It was Father O'Darrell's mass—nay, it was Mrs. O'Dowla's mass; and that good woman was secretly weeping, in an exuberance of ecstatic piety, at the overwhelming thought that this mass was being offered up by Father O'Darrell exclusively for her intentions, as set forth, with pecuniary eloquence, in the "ongvelope" she had entrusted to the clerk. Curious to say, Mrs. O'Pollards, sitting hard by, thought the mass was her property.

It is not difficult to realise why such vast sums of money are spent in Ireland, by people who are by no means wealthy, upon procuring the celebration of masses. If the ambition for illicit power be sufficient to tempt weak Irishmen to organise secret societies, how much greater must be the temptation to a vain, silly woman to procure, by the expenditure of a little money, the special immolation of God upon the local altar to gratify her own private whim and with the ulterior object of achieving her own secret desires?

"Eternal Father," said Mrs. O'Dowla, reading from her prayer-book at the Canon, "I offer Thee that immolation of Thy beloved Son which was once made on the Cross, and is renewed now upon this altar; and I offer Thee, in the name of all creatures, all the Masses that are being celebrated, or which shall be, in all the world, in order to adore Thee and render Thee that homage which is Thy due, in thanksgiving for Thy innumerable benefits, to appease Thy justice violated by our sins, and to furnish it with the satisfaction it has a right to expect; finally to obtain all graces for myself, for the Church,

for the whole world, and for the dear souls in purgatory." [1]

Ignatius O'Dowla used to inquire from his mother by what right one human being should speak to God "in the name of all creatures"; and used to protest that it was dishonest in his mother, who was in the habit of paying for masses herself, to appropriate all the masses offered up and paid for by other people. And Ignatius used to go further and declaim against such a base conception of the Deity as to believe Him capable of being thus propitiated. But Mrs. O'Dowla, entrenched in her pew in the gallery, was impervious to such reasoning, and continued to throw her whole soul into the prayer prescribed for her by the Church.

Down in the seatless aisle—as the entire ground floor of the chapel, nave and transepts, was called—the men occupied that half of the ⊤ which was on the right hand, or Epistle side, of the altar; the corresponding half, at the left or Gospel side, being occupied by the women; the altar was situated at the central point of the horizontal line of the ⊤. Although no partition separated the men from the women, it was no infrequent sight to see the women packed close together, with bare standing-room, while large vacant spaces of flag could be seen at the men's side, and *vice versa*. The Epistle side of the aisle was most crowded this morning, for the men were anxious to have mass over and be free to attend the arrival of the train and take part in the procession to the place of the meeting.

Owing to the closeness of the atmosphere in the aisles, several hundreds of people remained out in the chapel yard. At the Epistle side of the yard men were kneeling bareheaded on one knee in the open air, resting the elbow on the other knee and generally reposing their jaws in the hollow of their hands. The younger men carried their soft felt hats under their armpits, or "axters"; and on the ground beside each old man stood his shabby tall hat, containing handkerchief, pipe, matches, penknife, plug of tobacco, and other indispensable sundries, while its owner told his beads with much devotion. Boys were

grouped together in corners about the doors, and occasionally threw pebbles at some particularly glossy bald head, or chatted in whispers about what was to be done after mass. At the Gospel side some of the women too knelt out-of-doors, with their hoods or shawls drawn closely over their heads, telling their beads. They could be heard calling out, "Awr, nawr, thawr, nav,"[2] at the beginning of each decade; and, whenever they heard the bell tolled by the altar boy inside, they groaned and struck their breasts with fervour. Once or twice a year Father Lawnavawla or his fellow-curate, Father O'Driscoll, used to chase the men and women into the chapel, cuffing the more obstinate ones and even beating them with the stick.

The gong sounded thrice at the *Sanctus* and the possessors of prayer-books, within the chapel, explained to the Creator why it was "truly meet, just, right, and available to salvation,"[3] that they should praise Him, as if they had shrewdly considered the *pros* and *cons* before committing themselves. When the supreme moment of the Elevation arrived, all prostrated themselves, and loud groans resounded from the aisles. At a later stage of the celebration, the bell was tinkled thrice and breasts were beaten at the *Domine Non Sum Dignus;* then the Ablutions were drunk by the parish priest, and the congregation in the aisles rose from their knees and stood on the flagged floor, and those in the yard crowded into the chapel like herds of cattle. The occupants of the three large galleries sat comfortably in their pews, which rose in tiers one over the other, the whole being supported on pillars embedded in the floors of the aisles.

The customary interval for sneezing, coughing, and the use of pocket-handkerchiefs by those who had them, having elapsed, Father O'Darrell, P.P., commenced to make his announcements to his flock, laboriously reading them from slips of paper. First the congregation were asked to pray for the repose of the souls of those who had died since the preceding Sunday; and "for the speedy recovery or happy death" of those who were in danger of death by sickness; and for the repose of the souls of

those "whose anniversaries occur at this time," and whose relatives could afford the luxury of praying for them.

Then they were reminded of the approach of the festivals of All Souls and All Saints, when all good practical Catholics are bound to put the names of their deceased relatives on "the altar list for the dead," at the customary graduated fee per head according to the good, practical Catholic's position in life. A stimulating exhortation followed on the wholesomeness of this duty, illustrated in a touching manner by a recital of the agonies suffered by the souls in purgatory.

Rolling his large eyes, and assuming that sanctified expression for which he was celebrated, Father O'Darrell exclaimed: "Think of the dear mother's, the beloved father's, the strong brother's, the darling sister's, the son's, the daughter's soul this day in torture in those flames which, Our Holy Mother the Church teaches us, differ or are distinguished and differentiated only from those of hell in being finite. Think of it, me dearly beloved brethren, try or endeavour to realise the face of your friend in pain whose little finger you would not willingly see pricked with a brass pin when he or she was alive! Think of it, you father, you mother, you son, you daughter, you brother, you sister, listening to me here to-day, and decide whether you will stand callously by and lift no hand, stir no foot, open no purse-string to shorten their agony. The fountains of grace, the superabundant treasuries of the Church are open to you members of the Church Militant, but are closed, shut, saled or sealed, and barred for ever to your poor friends who belong to the Church Suffering. Will you not, out of your riches, give a little to the poor souls in purgatory? Think of it, ponder on it, dwell on it, and you will see why Our Holy Mother the Church has instituted this sacred festival which she will so soon be celebrating, and in which she invites you to bear a part."

Open-mouthed, they heard him and were convinced, as they had always been, and as their fathers and mothers had been before them. When Father O'Darrell concluded

his argument he felt that he need have no fear of diminished offerings for next All Souls' Day.

But yet all this did not satisfy the curiosity of the three thousand "good, practical Catholics," and when the pastor took the missal in his hand, to read aloud, first in Irish and then in English, the gospel of the day (at the first word of which every one in the galleries stood up), there was a general feeling of disappointment, most of the congregation taking it for granted that there was to be no allusion to the murder at that mass. Thomas O'Brile and his wife, on the contrary, drew a breath of relief, as they sat in the gallery.

"In nanim in na-her, oggus a vick, oggus a shprid nave, amen," [4] rose in a murmur from the aisles as the crowds settled themselves down to doze on their feet like horses through a mesmerising sermon on dogma.

But as the Judge, when criticised in press or speech, places a cause in the list next day which gives him an opening for reply in self-defence, without seeming to leave his ordinary routine, so Father O'Darrell, ignoring the day's gospel, seized his opportunity to make the oracular reference to the murder of Mr. Culvert which was expected from him.

He took as his text: "*As He saith also in another place: Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech.*"

"This country of ours, this thrice blessed island of saints and scholars," said Father O'Darrell in a silence that seemed breathless, "enjoys, perhaps, more than any nation in times present or past, the special blessing, patronage, an' grace, and the singular protection of Our Blessed Lady. Look around you, those of you who by God's blessing are educated" (here John O'Dowla shook himself and gave a slight cough) "and see what a priceless treasure holy Erin possesses, a treasure which riches cannot purchase or buy, which the glories of war, the triumphs or victories of diplomacy, the achievements of what is called science, the giant fabrics of mills and factories, could not, if they were all put together, could not purchase for one single instant, one iota, one scin-

tilla of time! What is it, Catholics of Gallowglass? Too well, a, too well ye know it is the treasure, the priceless treasure of our Holy Roman Catholic faith. That faith which amidst all the trials, the wars, all the, a, bloodshed of seven centuries, is flourishing to-day, thank God, in our midst as freshly, as vigorously, as, a, superabundantly, as, a, magnificently, as when Patrick and Columkille immortalised our land. Well may the nations of Europe envy us! Well may the faith of the Irishman be spoken of as the brightest gem in the tiara of His Holiness the Pope!

"Look at England, or Great Britain as it is called, faithless, godless, irreligious England! Of what avail to her, are all her, a, manufactures, her, a, army, her, a, navy, her, a, institutions, her, a, boasted wealth, her, a, boundless empire? Of what avail? *None, none, none!* Her stomach is her God! She has lost her faith, she is a nation of heretics.

"Look at France, that was once the pride of heaven, the eldest daughter of the Church, but now, alas, godless, atheistical, deistical, euphemistical France! Of what avail or aveal is her greatness in the arts and the, a, sciences, of what avail, a, her martial glory? She is an outcast, she is lost, a prey to infidelity and atheism!

"Look at Italy herself even, that land which, a, God in His, a, boundless, infinite, unmeasurable mercy has marked out as the abode of His sole vicar on earth! She too is renegade. The Holy Father is a prisoner in his palace at the, a, Vatican, and would be insulted, yea, worse, would be killed, martryed, were he to show his august and sacred sacrosanct person in the streets of Rome."

Here there was some sobbing, clapping of hands and groaning, followed by coughing and sneezing.

"Go where you will," cried Father O'Darrell, joining the tips of his fingers and twirling his thumbs in front of his capacious person, and pausing for a while as if to allow his audience breathing-space in which to feast their eyes on his own picturesque figure arrayed in vestments of white and gold, "Go where you will, there is no land so, a, blessed by providence as this land of ours,

this holy Ireland. Look at Asia and Africa, and, a, think, if you can, of the millions, yea, of the hundreds of millions in those vast continents who have not the blessing of the one true faith, for whom the realms of joy hereafter are for ever closed, who shall never hear the soothing words, 'Come, ye blessed of my father!' on the last day. Contemplate it, me dearly beloved brethren, and you will have some faint and paltry idea of the debt of gratitude which each and every one of you here present owes to Our Holy Mother the Church.

"And what, you may ask, is the cause of all this? can tell you, me brethren. All this is to be attributed, a, in my belief to the special attachment of Our Blessed Lady to Ireland for Ireland's special devotion to her service, to herself and to the Sacred Heart of her adorable Son. Then is it, a, any wonder, a, any cause of astonishment that, a, an event, an occurrence, an incident which, a, has recently or racently happened in our midst——"

At these words a weird rustling crept through the multitude, and many held their breath and clenched their teeth. Mrs. O'Brile clutched her husband's sleeve and moved about restlessly. John O'Dowla felt it advisable to see that his collar and tie were properly adjusted, for, in his opinion, the crisis could not now be far off.

Even the sixteen altar-boys, arrayed in their white surplices and purple soutanes, seemed to be listening for once to what the priest was saying, as they lay stretched in various attitudes on the steps at Father O'Darrell's feet—an unprecedented occurrence.

The senior boy whispered to his next neighbour: "Good God, I wander is Darrell after hearing that we stole the charcoal our the censer last night?" At which the very small boy who had actually committed the theft under duress, grew very red and began to cry.

Mr. O'Brile was resolved to rise in his place and make a public protest, in case his own name or that of any member of his family should be mentioned from the altar.

"Is, it, any, marvel, then, that, this, fearful, outrage, and, crime, which, has, desecrated, our, parish, should grieve our Blessed Lady and pain me as the pastor, the

priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech, the father of this parish? I am here to expound the faith and morals of our Holy Church. 'Tis yeers to hear and to obey the doctrine which I preach. As Catholics knowing yeer catechisms, ye have learned the fifth commandment 'Thou shalt not kill.' Ye know its meaning and ye know the curse that lights on every murderer from Cain till now. Even the murder of one outside the faith is not always excusable;[5] unless indeed under certain thay'logical or theological conditions that I need not enter into with ye. I can't go beyond the teaching of the Church with regard to the murder of heretics. But I'll take it on meself to point out one important matter. The man that strikes down a heretic, takes it on himself to hurl a human soul into eternal torture, a soul perhaps that might have repented and conformed to the doctrines of our Holy Faith had it been spared to do so. I may be exsayding or exceeding my province in saying so much; but I'll risk the consequences.

"No one can pray for the repose of the heretic soul and that adds a faiture or a feature of special intricacy to such a murder, as, a, Saint Alphonsus Liguori, or St. Francis de Sales, I forget which, well puts it, me dearly beloved brethren. Were a good Catholic murdered in venial sin, we could do many things to give his soul a helping hand. We could offer up mass for him. The pious Catholics could pray for his eternal salvation, some of ye could go the rounds of the stations, others of us could do a novena: in fact many things could be done. But in this case, nothing can be done, me dearly beloved brethren. And, after, all, it's, as well that it can't; for, even, if, it, could, it would be all, useless, for, as ye know, in the words of the catechism, outside the, one, true, faith, and one, true, church, there is no salvation.

"Therefore it is that I, as the spiritual father of the parish, responsible to God for its eternal welfare, hope and trust that each and every one of you will join with me in condemning all rashness an' violence, an' above all in condemning all secret societies, whether freemasons, orangemen, ribbonmen, fenians, or dynamiters, in the

strongest possible language. I would scorn to insult ye, by harbouring the thought for a moment that the deed was done by a parishioner of Gallowglass. This parish, thank God, has been too well instructed in the Christian doctrine to be mixed up in such affairs.[6]

"Ye will be addressed later on to-day by the great patriots who are coming amongst us with the sanction of the Archbishops and Bishops of our Holy Church. I am not an ardent politician and therefore I have declined with thanks the proud position of chairman, but I am sure nothing will be said at that meeting which will be calculated to bring the blush of shame to the cheek of any good practical Catholic. We're all patriots in Gallowglass. We'd all shed the last drop of our blood for old Ireland. I have to leave ye the use of yeer own free wills as to whether ye shall attend or attind this meeting or not. A subsequent engagement deters me from being present, but ye may all go if ye can, an' I'm sure many of ye will go.

"To as many of ye as do go, I say, remember to behave yeerselves as good, practical Catholics. Let there be no scandal, no rowing, nor fighting, nor drunkenness. If a man wants a pint or a drop, well an' good, let him take it to be sure, but no drinking to excess; only the necessary refreshment usual on such occasions. Those that can't take it in moderation might as well keep away from it entirely for this wan day o' their lives.

"To the grocers and publicans, who are perhaps the most numerous and, I may also say, one of the most respectable bodies of traders in Gallowglass, though many traders without licences are equally honourable an' some more so" (here Mr. and Mrs. O'Dowla preened their plumage with self-satisfaction), "I need only say I hope they will tolerate no drunkenness on their premises. Every one has a right to get enough o' necessary refreshment, as I said before, but let no one get more than enough."

Then Father O'Darrell delivered an exuberant peroration, in which he said he hoped to meet every one of his parishioners and all other good, practical Catholics in the

realms of eternal bliss after the last judgment had been pronounced in the valley of Jehosaphat.

"What a nice, expressive way he has o' puttin' things," said Mrs. O'Dowla at breakfast.

John looked up at his wife in amazement: "I was goin' to say somethin' meself about the sermon," he said, swinging his head to and fro.

"Go on, then, out with it," urged his wife.

"I have some views too," said Ignatius quietly.

"What is the meaning of this mystery, papa?" asked Julia, who never went to first mass except on the days she went to communion, and who was anxious to know what Father O'Darrell had been preaching about. "Father O'Darrell is a great pet of mine and I will not have anything said against him in my presence."

"I was going to say, he, he, he, if I might be allowed," sniggered John, licking his egg-spoon back upwards, "that it was a great pity his reverence didn't introduce into his discourse the expression 'casting oil on the troubled waters.' It was a very eloquent sermon, but I can tell you 'twould be greatly set off by the semayla. I'm surprised it wasn't used."

"I'm surprised he didn't introduce a little Christianity into his sermon," said Ignatius.

"Wisha, they can't carry everything in their heads. I suppose his reverence forgot it. Why then what does th' ould sayin' mane, John?" said Mrs. O'Dowla, ignoring Ignatius's remark.

"Mother," interposed Julia, "every question you ask drives a nail in the coffin of your own reputation for manners."

"We must ask questions or we'll get no information, girl!" replied Mrs. O'Dowla.

"The maning of the expression is complicated," began John, squeezing his second egg into the empty shell of the first so as to economise labour; for he would thus be enabled to cast the two shells into the grate at once. "To cast oil on water is hardly ever done now."

"I should think not," laughed Mrs. O'Dowla, thinking of the hair oil and castor oil of which she sold so much daily in the shop. "'Twould be costly divarshun!"

"Ah, but, d'ye see, it was done frequently before our Lord's time," said John, waving his egg-spoon to emphasise his words, "an' that's how it comes into the Bible."

"An' is that the maning of it?" asked Mrs. O'Dowla.

"That's it for you now," said John, with great diffidence, caused by the presence of Ignatius, "oily, slippery, soapy, it means to do something to help people over their difficulties, to help them to get over everything like an eel without breakin' any bones."

"Why, thin, I never understood that before," said Mrs. O'Dowla, "though 'tis a very old sayin' in our family."

"They throw barrels of oil out of ships, hove to by stress of weather at sea, to calm the waves," said Ignatius, speaking very gravely and distinctly.

"Where is Hugh from his breakfast?" asked John O'Dowla, eager to change the topic of conversation.

"Barrels of it? Indeed that's not likely," said Mrs. O'Dowla.

"No more oil, please, at this meal," interposed Julia. "Be good enough to change the conversation."

"I'll give a hint to wan o' the speakers at the meeting to bring it into his speech," said John, as if speaking to his own memory. "Others perhaps will appreciate it!"

"Papa, you must promise me before you leave the table not to do any such thing!" said Julia. "If the expression was at all suitable or polite, Father O'Darrell would not have so studiously avoided it. More tea, mamma. Hold your tongue, papa, I'll defend Father O'Darrell. Let me tell you for your information, that he gave a retreat at our convent last summer and every girl in the school thought he was awfully severe from his sermons and all that, but I knew better and I told them in advance that he was quite the contrary. When the day for confession came, they were all shivering with dread, but the first girl that went into the box ran up to me after confession and said: 'He's the loveliest man I ever saw. His first word to me was "*Well, chicken, what have you done since the last time?*"' And half-a-dozen girls after came up to say he had called them 'honey,' 'ducky,' 'pet,' and so forth. One of them he actually called *Grizzle-Wizzle!*

'*Oh*,' said the same girl to me, Lily Woolenby was her name, '*I wish I could steal his back curls for a fringe!*' One of the sins she confessed to him was that she had used the word *man* or *young man*, I forget which, six times since she was last at confession. Six times, mind you! She should have said *basket;* that was the rule in the convent. We should always refer to men as *baskets*. And he forgave her with a smile! Therefore I'll have nothing said against Father O'Darrell."

"How well they know how to pass it off with the childern, an' have their funny word with um, with all their cares!" said Mrs. O'Dowla. "But you shouldn't tell what occurred inside the box, Julia."

"'Tis very indiscreet to do so, he, he, he!" laughed John. "It might be twisted, or conthwarted, or re-hashed in some way, somehow or another by somebody or another——"

"You're committing mortal sin by telling the secrets of the confessional. You'll be sent to the bishop the next time you go to confession," said Ignatius.

Julia wiped the rising tears from her eyes with her pocket-handkerchief.

"Mother," she whimpered, "I'll have a fit of screws the whole morning now because you said I shouldn't have said that. I wish you would be more thoughtful!"

"Screws!" exclaimed John O'Dowla, looking up at his wife.

"Yesha, scruples she manes. She's never done with 'em!" said Mrs. O'Dowla in response to his appealing glance. "But you needn't fear, Jule, first mass this morning was said for you, and for my special intention, an' the intention I prayed for was that God would enlighten you to make up your mind in the way that would be the best for us all."

"First mass! Screws! Scruples! Mrs. O'Dowla, you might have found a better way of investing my pound. 'Tisn't so easily earned!" said John O'Dowla; but observing that he was stared at by Julia he tried to pass it off with "Pup, pup, pup, my God Almighty! Tw-oh, tw-oh, tw-oh!"

"Ireland is a blessed country be all accounts," exclaimed Mrs. O'Dowla, reverting to the sermon. "I'm glad I was never in any other country. Those who lives out of Ireland are to be pitied!"

"Isn't she a wretched, mendicant country, that every one leaves who can pay the passage money to America?" asked Ignatius.

"She's a fine country for priests and nuns, but who else is she fine for?" asked John O'Dowla.

"She's a good country for all practical Catholics!" said Mrs. O'Dowla.

"She's a good country for Govermint officials, Clerks of the Peace, Clerks of Unions, policemen, aye, an' agitators!" said John excitedly, as if letting himself loose. "I say so, I know it, but—but—but—he, he, he! The man that would say so publicly would be an eejut, an' deserve to be kicked for his pains. I think it, but, a vickyo, I always remember that speech is silver, mere threepenny bits, but silence is gold, pure sovereigns an' half-sovereigns!"

"A wise head keeps a still tongue!" put in Mrs. O'Dowla.

"There isn't a man in town with a bank account, but thinks the same o' these agitators comin' here to-day as I do, but mark how they keep it dark," said John. "Let us do as every one else does!"

"'Tis an old saying that what everywan says must be true. I suppose the same applies to what they don't say," said Mrs. O'Dowla with doubtful perspicuity; "but, of course, I differ complately about the priests an' nuns."

"The priests should never be spoken ill of outside," said John, "whatever may be said in the family circle. It would never do!"

"It isn't lucky, I can tell you. They're the Lord's anointed!" said Mrs. O'Dowla. "Didn't you hear Father O'Darrell usin' me own very words, 'The Orders o' Melchesedecht'?"

Ignatius O'Dowla laughed loudly.

"There used to be a deal better sermons when I was a gorsoon an' the priests used to preach in Irish," said John O'Dowla. "Well, I'll never forget ould Father

MISS JULIA O'DOWLA GOING TO MASS

"High hangin' to her, the slut!" muttered Mrs. Arnill to her companion. "She never has a word for nobody. Where do she think she was got, with her craking boots an' her flounces, griggin' her betters? Divil a convint she'll ever guine to, or, if she do, she'll soon be wallopped out of it aggin!" – p. 251.

Killtime, he used to biggen a *strounkawn*[7] in Irish every Sunday wid *In nomin an aher, oggus a vick, oggus a Shprid nave!* An' he'd hardly have the sign o' the cross made before ould Mr. Benmore—the present man's father—would call out in English across the chapel to ould Mr. Macmade, ' Well, John, how are the crops ? ' and Macmade an' himself would keep up a great conversation between 'em, talking as loud as ever they could to wan another in English, while ould Father Killtime would be preachin' away in Irish. 'Tis to hear what the two gintlemin were saying I used to have me ear cocked an' many a wan beside me, I'll warrant ye ! "

At this stage John caught Julia's eye and hastily concluded by saying, " He, he, he ! So on, so forth, et cetera ! "

" Mother," said Julia, " I have listened to this conversation for some time and I may be wrong, but I am under the impression that I have heard blasphemy, infidelity, free thought, and sacrilege spoken at this table, and I want to hear no more of it."

And Julia rose calmly and left the room. She went upstairs, and spent an hour arraying herself in a new dress, hat, boots and gloves. Then taking her parasol in one hand and her " Key to Heaven " in the other, she took a solitary walk down Bullrush Street, stalking along stiffly as if she had corns, slapping her parasol against the pebbles, believing that to be the correct thing for a young lady to do, when exhibiting herself in her Sunday clothes before last mass for the admiration of the townspeople.

" Oh, my dear, but you're a great shtiler, Miss Jule," said Mrs. Arnill, who met her master's daughter going to mass. But Julia passed her by, as if she were a chaffinch perched on one of the telegraph wires over which a message was humming from the police barrack to Dublin Castle.

" High hangin' to her, the slut ! " muttered Mrs. Arnill to her companion, Ellen Spilltan, " she never has a word for nobody ! Where do she think she was got, with her craking boots an' her flounces, griggin' her betters ? Divil a convint she'll ever guine to, or if she do she'll soon be wolloped out of it agin ! "

"She have fine times, begannies, an' 'tis aykil to her is long is she can prance around the roads of a Sunday in a grand dress like that. No wan can say but her mother gives her the best of everythin', atin', an' drinkin', an' clothes, an' eddicashin, an' full an' plinty, an' divil a hayporth she axes her to do!" said Mrs. Spilltan.

"Do! huh, huh! She's not able to walk wid laziness, a body would swear she was spanselled, the way she hobbles. That wax doll couldn't wet the pints of a piece o' hussif thread to run it through th' eye of a needle. If she was my child, I'd hev her out thinnin' a drill o' turnips, or getherin' a bitteen o' manure on the roads, or thryin' the hins; so I would, is sure is God is in heaven! I ax God's pardon!" said Mrs. Arnill hotly, being much stung at having been cut. Had Julia spoken to her, she would have expressed herself quite differently.

Hugh O'Dowla did not get up for breakfast. He had been awake all night, and when the bright tints of autumn dawn shone out before the eastern window of his bedroom, his eyes and temples were aching violently. All the previous troubles of his life seemed childish trifles when compared with the calamities in which he was now involved. Brain and heart were almost bursting with fear and anxiety. He could feel his pulse beating at his temples, in his eyes, and all over his head, while his heart knocked against his side so loudly that he wondered if it could be heard all over the house.

When Ignatius called him to breakfast he pleaded fatigue caused by work at the threshing on the previous day, as an excuse for remaining in bed; and while the others were discussing trivialities at breakfast he was in that worst of all fevers in which physical pain and mental perplexity combine in their efforts to break the thread of human life.

The four causes of his trouble stood arrayed before him in his solitude like hideous giants. His connection with Molly was a difficult monster to tackle, but it was one which could be temporised with; and, if it stood alone, would not be sufficient of itself to daunt his youthful spirit. But close beside it stood the larger spectre which

impersonated his guilty knowledge of Mr. Culvert's murder, a strain upon his conscience, involving dangers of arrest together with inevitable social disgrace, banishment from Gallowglass, and perhaps assassination. And, more terrifying yet, arose the still huger bulk of a third monster, namely, his association with the Valiants, a millstone which would cling to him all through life, clogging every effort and darkening all his prospects. Young as he was, he knew some men in Gallowglass who had joined secret societies in the days of 'Forty-eight [8] and 'Sixty-seven,[9] and he could read the white terror indelibly imprinted on their blanched faces. One of these men in particular, whom he knew, had been sentenced to be hanged, but his sentence was commuted and he was amnestied. That was many years ago, but the man looked like a walking corpse even at the present day when his safety was assured, when he was surrounded by his wife and growing family and was proprietor of a shop which did a prosperous trade. But, curious to say, even this spectre of the secret society was not the most appalling of the horrors which affected his mind. No, the loss of the thirty pounds, involving a suspicion of his own honesty in pecuniary matters, and entailing an open breach with his father which would probably lead to the discovery of all his other secrets and thereby immerse him in the gulf of ruin, loomed up largest and grimmest of the four horrors before which he quailed.

In some respects the boy's condition resembled that of a drunkard recovering from a prolonged bout of intoxication, trying to regain his lost mental equilibrium in spite of the hideous figments of his brain which ever beckon him back to the realms of delirium. The longer Hugh O'Dowla pondered on his troubles the more colossal grew the four spectres, the more overwhelming and inextricable seemed the hopeless maze in which he was entangled. The loss of the money was urgent, for his deal with M'Gurk must be discovered at farthest in a day or two, and then the disclosure of all the rest might follow.

It cannot be denied that there is a leaven of pecuniary dishonesty in Ireland, as there is all over the globe,

wherever business transactions are carried on. But there exists amongst the true-born Irish, an incontestable, ingrained contempt for money which produces some remarkable consequences ; one being that the average native-born, Irish official—whether he be under Government or under a municipal authority—is, as a rule, impervious to pecuniary bribes, and will be offended if they are tendered to him. No one, for instance, dares to offer a tip to an Irish policeman. Another result is that payment for small services, the equivalent of tips in England, is unknown in Ireland ; except, perhaps, in districts frequented by English tourists, or amongst waiters who attend upon commercial travellers. In Gallowglass, men and women of every class gave their time and service, and lent their property, to one another without receiving any cash payment.

This feeling of contempt for money was very strongly developed in Hugh O'Dowla, and, therefore, the thought that he could be suspected of misappropriating it cut him to the quick. The priests encourage this sentiment ; and there is no text more frequently preached upon in Ireland than that memorable saying of Christ : " It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

It is because of their belief in this text that the dying Catholics fling all their accumulated hoardings into the lap of the priests on their death-beds. It is because of the prevalence of this foolish spirit that priests are rich and people are poor in Ireland.

It would have been well for Hugh O'Dowla if he had any acquaintance whatever with the New Testament ; for, to a mind constituted as his was, he might have found in its pages a map of life, a rule of conduct which would have developed in him the qualifications for a distinguished career. All the priestly casuistry on which he had been nurtured from infancy, in the confessional, in the doctrinal preparation for the sacraments, in the equivocal sermons preached by Father O'Darrell and his sacerdotal confrères, stood like beams in his eye, obscuring his mental vision.

He did not even know that it is written : " The light

of the body is the eye : if therefore thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." If Hugh O'Dowla could only have seen the single path of duty lying plain and obvious before him now, his fever would have speedily subsided. If the boy only knew that it is not in a mysterious ritualistic confession, resorted to at stated times, that consolation is to be found, but in an open confession of faults from hour to hour, he would have found salvation in the most literal sense of that much-abused word.

Hugh O'Dowla did not know that St. James had said : "Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another that ye may be healed." If he had possessed the knowledge that it is not in secret, to a paid professional priest, but openly to those with whom he lived, to his father, his mother, his brother, his sister, that he was bound, by the law of Christ, to confess his faults, Hugh O'Dowla would have acted like a strong man in his trouble.

"Open confession is good for the soul," was one of the commonest sayings in daily use in Gallowglass, but nobody practised it. On the contrary, private confession with its inevitable accompaniment of a double life, was the quack remedy to which everyone in the town had recourse. John O'Dowla, Mrs. O'Dowla, and Julia, all wended their way into the mysterious shadows of the confessional and there told to Father O'Darrell or Father Lawnavawla or Father O'Driscoll, their tales of private vices, real and imaginary, which they concealed from one another ; and, by so concealing, fostered.

Ignatius came up to his brother's bedroom some time after breakfast.

"How is your headache ?" he said. "Are you not better have some breakfast ?"

Hugh pressed his fingers against his temples and said he would make an effort to dress and go downstairs. The boy felt that any change could not fail to bring relief from the hell of misery in which he was writhing.

Ignatius then left, but returned presently, when Hugh had almost finished dressing, and said : "Where is the mare ? I was thinking of going for a ride. And I cannot

find Nep either! The boys tell me he was not seen all day yesterday."

"I left the mare at Garekiln last night," said Hugh nervously, "an' I don't know where Nep is!"

"Curious," was the only comment the elder brother made as he walked out of the room.

Hugh, alarmed by Ignatius's suspicions, determined to get out of doors, and having completed his toilet, which was a brief one, for he had not yet begun to shave the soft down which had appeared on his chin and cheeks, he presented himself in the parlour, where, after many searching inquiries as to his health from his father and mother, he was suffered to proceed with his belated breakfast.

[1] In the Catholic prayer-book used by Mrs. O'Dowla, called *The Treasury of the Sacred Heart*, we find the following note appended to the above prayer: "His Holiness, Pope Pius IX., has granted an indulgence of three years to all who, with contrite hearts, shall recite the above prayer during the holy sacrifice of the Mass. The Indulgence is applicable to the souls in purgatory."

[2] Opening of the Lord's Prayer in Irish.

[3] *The Treasury of the Sacred Heart.*

[4] In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

[5] "It was an interesting question, whether the Pope would definitely and unconditionally condemn murder, whether for religious or political motives," wrote Lord Acton, who was himself a Catholic, to Miss Mary Gladstone, on September 1, 1883, in reference to the Irish Land Agitation, and almost at the very date of Father O'Darrell's sermon. "It would have borne untold consequences," continued Lord Acton, "as a direct revocation of the Vatican system, which stands or falls with the doctrine that one may murder a Protestant. But I don't believe so audacious a change of front would have moved a single priest in Ireland."—*Lord Acton's Letters*, London, 1904.

[6] Equivocating and contemptible as this harangue may appear, and as it undoubtedly was, Father O'Darrell went farther in his condemnation of the murder than an Italian priest would have gone in similar circumstances.

[7] A tedious narration in prose or verse.

[8] Smith O'Brien's Rising.

[9] The Fenian Rising.

CHAPTER XIX

"Sweet words, low-crooked curt'sies and base spaniel-fawning."
—SHAKESPEARE.

HUGH O'DOWLA had not finished breakfast when a group of men came across the street towards John O'Dowla's open door. O'Pollards, Sporeen, Sawnuch, M'Climber, Wegless, and even Thomas O'Brile, as well as Roland Glenpower and several farmers from the immediate vicinity of Gallowglass, were amongst them. It was evident that the others resented Mr. O'Brile's presence; for when they were discussing some knotty point and questions were being asked on all sides, O'Brile was never appealed to for his opinion. Judging by the amount of gesticulation and swearing they indulged in, as they huddled along in a progress which resembled a scrimmage at football, one would have concluded that they were in some serious trouble.

"Where's the man o' the seven languages?" cried Roland Glenpower, bursting into the parlour in his Sunday clothes, with a green rosette in his button-hole. "We have a job for him at last. I'll never know the use o' the dead languages if I don't know it this day! Morrow, Bridget, you're looking slashing. Morrow, John!"

"Oh, Roland!" exclaimed John O'Dowla, "Cunnish thaw,[1] come in, lave ye all! Sig sheesh! Set, set, let ye set! Morrow, Donal, cunnish thaw? Morrow, morrow, morrow, to the whole o' ye. Cunnish thaw! Dee-gutt, dee-gutt![2] God save ye, gentlemen!"

"Deess mirra wid Pawderig,[3] Mister O'Dowla!" was the answer as they crowded in, like cattle entering a stall.

"Ye're welcome, gentlemen!" said Mrs. O'Dowla. "An' purty ye look with yeer green rosettes, my dear;

but if ye'd come up to the drawing-room ye'd see us to more advantage. Oant ye come upstairs ? "

" We'll do as we are, ma'am, thank you kindly," they said.

" Too much grandeur wouldn't be good for us, Bridget," said Roland.

Sporeen pushed forward nervously, holding a roll of foolscap in his hand : " See here now, Mr. O'Dowla, they's naw use in the town turnin' around an' disgracin' itself, an' sure if we're not up an' doin', that's what 'twill be after doin'. Father Lawnavawla can't come is he has to turn around an' say second mass, an' Father O'Driscoll takes no part in politics, but we has three Town Commissioners here now an' yerself, that's four, and we has four Poor Law Guardians an' yerself, that's five, and I'm just after turnin' around an' getherin' 'em threen a kayla [4] just as they are ! Af I was dyin' I could turn around an' swear I didn't pick nor choose ! "

John O'Dowla was rubbing his eyes with his handkerchief, and kept saying, " Pup, pup, pup," all through Sporeen's remarks.

" I was greatly affeared the country fellows 'ud turn around an' cut us out, Mr. O'Dowla (pup, pup, pup), so I turned around an' collected Mr. Glenpower an' the rest of 'em, an' we're makin' up a deputation to meet the Layders wid an adderess from the people o' Gallowglass (pup, pup, pup). There, 'tis after eleven o'clock. We must be slippy ! "

" We're rather disorganited, d'ye see ? " said Mr. Wegless, the publican.

" Ah, see, 'tis disorganised you mean ! " interposed John O'Dowla, standing on his toes.

" Case in point, John, case in point," cried Sawnuch.

" I said so," retorted Mr. Wegless. " D'ye see that now ? "

" Amoshta fain, you didn't ! What ? " cried O'Pollards.

" I'm no 'thority on such matters, let ye fight it out between ye," said Roland, backing out of the crowd.

" Lave ye be aisy now," said Timothy M'Climber.

" If I might be allowed to throw oil on the troubled

waters, he, he, he!" began John O'Dowla, looking down at his feet.

"Damn good! Slashing!" cried Roland. "I agree, I agree!"

"Hear, hear!" cried several.

"Applause! Applause!" cried Sporeen. "I rises to order. Hould yeer whisht! Lave ye turn around an' lay me ree' the 'dress."

"Oh, fie! Queck to 'im!" cried Roland, as if he were admonishing a backsliding hound. "Lave him read th' address!"

"Is Ignatius inside?" asked Sporeen.

Mrs. O'Dowla replied that her eldest son had gone out for the day.

Sporeen expressed his keen disappointment at the intelligence as he unfolded the foolscap, and held it in his trembling hands where it quivered like an aspen. Turning to Hugh O'Dowla, who lay on the sofa behind the breakfast table, afflicted with a distracting headache, he exclaimed: "Hugh, keep yer air open an' hev an eye to this, what, an' if they's anything amiss, turn around at wanst an' pull me up. Sure, 'tis for your father's sanction we mostly kem in, an' also to get a Latin coatation from Ignatius, but may be yerself 'ud do us. Few o' thim country fellows knows B from a bull's foot, an' we want to turn around an' show they's some ejjication in the town."

Hugh had been watching for an opportunity to slip out of the room unobserved: "I never heard an address to a leader before," he said. "I warn you that you come to a very bad critic."

Thomas O'Brile looked towards him, and Hugh quailed before his penetrating glance.

"Eh? Now, Oweneen, shut up your gob!" said Sporeen. "Th' idee occurred to me last night that I'd turn around an' ask Naishy to gi' me a coatation!"

Roland Glenpower created a diversion by crying out: "Bravo, Mr. Sporeen, the best of idees come flash like that across me own mind. I'm the divil for brilliant idees like that! I assure you, I bleeve your word!"

Sporeen was quivering with excitement, and he said:

" Though I spakes badly I writes grammatically, thanks to the Christian Brothers. Listen, gintlemen, I'm biggen-in', lave ye cock yeer airs! 'Honoured and Patriotic Sirr'——"

" Damn good! Rattling good! I endorse that!" cried Roland.

" Ah, see, Roland, that's only the interroduction, better hear what comes last first," interposed John O'Dowla.

Sporeen read on: " We, the Town Commissioners and Poor Law Guardians and patriotic townspeople of this ancient, thriving, hospitable and historic municipal town!"

" Divilish good! Bravo! What?" cried O'Pollards. " That's the platform! What?"

" Lave ye be aisy now!" said M'Climber.

" Aisy now, will ye?" cried Sporeen, " I knows none o' ye heard this before; but, sure, lay me turn around an' read it. Hugh, have y' yer airs cocked? Be sure an' pull me up!"

" Excuse me for a second," said John O'Dowla, " but you might put in a word about the new gas works and the flags."

" They can't help but notice the flags theirself, sir!" said Sporeen, manifesting some disappointment at the suggestion, taking it very unkindly that it could have been supposed that he had omitted anything which ought to have been inserted.

" True," said John, " but as they won't be here in the night time, we mustn't lave out the gas! Pup, pup, pup!"

" Oh, they'll be here! They won't lave till the nine train!" said several.

" 'Tis a great pity 'tis a Sunday night. They'll be addled with the bawlin' o' the fat calves!" said Sporeen. " But we can't turn around an' stop it. Anyhow there oant be many sooks this time o' year!"

" Tut, tut! What nonsense!" exclaimed John. " The screeching o' the fat calves in the street o' Gallowglass every Sunday night is music to be proud of. Many the quarter an' half stone av oats, bran an' male we sell on the head of it!"

"D'ye see that now?" said Mr. Wegless; "many the pint o' porter an' half drop we sells on account o' the calves. D'ye see that now?"

"See, that'll do!" said John O'Dowla, lifting up both hands. "Go on with th' adderess."

"Where'll the gentlemen get their dinner?" asked Thomas O'Brile.

"What's that to us? What?" cried Mr. O'Pollards, in whose opinion Mr. O'Brile should not be tolerated amongst them. Indeed, if O'Brile were not a man of importance, a Guardian and a Town Commissioner, O'Pollards would have suggested his expulsion from the company.

"Don't you say the town is hospitable?" said Mr. O'Brile.

"Yesha, we says many things in these 'dresses, but do anywan mane to be axed to turn around an' stick to it?" cried Sporeen, whose face was growing careworn. "I tell ye that there's no harm in puttin' anything we likes into this. 'Tis only for the appearance o' the thing, jest to make a little burst, a bit of a show, the way we wouldn't be cut out be Quisk an' Scarlant an' the country fellows that I turned around an' med it up at all."

"Don't we often say 'Lau brau'[6] to a body on the road an' at the same time we'd wish the same body to be burnin' in hell, what?" roared O'Pollards.

A loud laugh followed this sally.

"Avail of the opportunity—" continued Sporeen.

"It should be avail ourselves!" said Hugh, endeavouring to get near the door with a view to making a hasty exit.

Sporeen halted in blank amazement: "Who the divil else would we turn around an' avail, oany ourselves? Who?" he asked with dry quivering lips, on which a slight foam was gathering.

"See here now!" said John O'Dowla, "that's of no importance."

"Read on, young Sporeen!" cried Sawnuch, "an', case in point, don't alter it, for fear 'twould be taken that th' address only amendated from ourselves, to use a fammiller expression!" And Sawnuch's presentation of the case met with general approval.

"D'ye see that now?" said Mr. Wegless, the publican. "I'm not too Englified meself, but I understand that. D'ye see?"

"Avail of the opportunity vouchsafed——"

"Better say *graciously vouchsafed*, that's the way 'tis put in the Prayer before Mass!" said John O'Dowla. "We can't be too partikler about style. Pup, pup, pup!"

. . . "by your thrice welcome presence in our midst to present you, honoured, illustrious and long-suffering sir, with this address as a graceful token and highly-prized emblem——"

"Bloody good! Great! Spanking entirely!" cried Roland, catching the words "highly prized" from his post at the window, where he was admiring his fine hunter and thinking whether he had not better tell the boy to put him up for the day.

. . . "of our fraternal and respectful feelings and of the unbounded esteem in which we hold your public and private life, and we tender you our hearty congratulations on the near approach of the happy fructification of your labours and sufferings. Again and again you have seemed the embodiment of Irish resistance to unjust laws."

Here John O'Dowla produced a lead pencil from his vest and an envelope from the inside breast pocket of his coat. He rounded his lips until only a circular aperture was visible, as if he were about to whistle. Then he inserted the pencil, point foremost, into the opening and brought it out moist enough for note-taking and ostentatiously made a memorandum on the envelope.

Sporeen read on: "You are regarded and venerated by our noble race as the foremost champion of Irish Nationality, the vindicator of the nation's unity, patriotism, and benevolence, drawing on yourself in a fearful degree all that the fear and hate of baffled tyrants could suggest, until the story of your courage and fortitude, under troubled conditions, stands to-day a proud chapter in Irish history. As is truly meet, just and right, we bid you a fervid Celtic Caed Mille Failthe[6] from our true Irish hearts, and pray God that you may long be spared

to guide the destinies of your native land towards the goal of nationhood, sustaining her by your patriotism and gracing her with your eloquence. Signed, &c., &c."

Sporeen was gasping for breath. "There now for ye, I 'clare to God I'm sweatin'! I know I read it damn badly, an' 'tisn't but that I could turn around an' put on an Englified accent if I like. Whin I gets up to make a bit of a speech, sure I has such a accent that I do be hard set to know me own voice."

"Now, Hugh, as Naishy ain't here, could you put on a thaveen[7] o' Latin to th' upper o' that, what?" cried O'Pollards. "Good thing, man, give it a boost!"

"A moment! See! A moment!" cried John O'Dowla. "I have a few notes taken down. You should try to bring in the words 'ekklatt' and 'presstidge,' they're always used, and, as you didn't mention anything about casting oil on the troubled waters, I think 'twould be very aperrapo after the murder to do so!"

"Very well, Mr. O'Dowla, very well," said Sporeen sarcastically. "I only knows wan thing, what, an' 'tis this, that I'll never, never, as long as I draws me breath, turn around an' compose an adderess for the min o' Gallowglass again, if that's me thanks."

"Oh, I meant no slight. 'Tis a nate composition!" said John, "only in want of a little trimming!"

"Trimmin', Mr. O'Dowla, I says so meself," began Sporeen, "but 'tis Latin trimmin' I kem here for, Latin trimmin' that yer eldest son hev in plinty, an' yer second son isn't athout it ayther if he like to give it." And the young draper seemed on the point of crying.

"By God, I'm damn glad I'm going to see the classical languages put to use at last! They're tools I never yet saw a man working with, except the clergy, though we hears such a hell of a lot about their greatness an' all to that!" cried Roland Glenpower.

"Well, really, Sporeen, you put me in a hole," exclaimed Hugh bashfully, for his knowledge of Latin was not extensive. "It is by no means so easy as you think to get a quotation that would fit in well to that address! What would you think of '*Semel nos desanivimus omnes*,'

or '*O, Fons Bandusiæ, splendidior vitro,*' or '*Arma virumque cano,*' or '*Omnis Gallia divisa est,*' or '*Cras ingens iterabimus æquor,*' or '*Exegi monumentum ære perennius,*' or '*Quæ Regio——*' "

"Whisht, for God Almighty's sake!" roared Roland. "Where's the use o' surfeitin' us, as if we were cats in a tripe shop? They're all rattling, but give us wan snack, we'll lave it to yourself. You know the maning of 'em; we don't! Come to the point! Don't dwell on scent! Say the word! Which is it to be? I always had a good opinion o' y', Hugh. Don't you know I had?"

"Then I vote for '*Cras ingens iterabimus æquor,*'" said Hugh, smiling sorrowfully and wishing he were about to put the ocean between him and Gallowglass.

"I endorse it!" cried Roland. "'Tis slashing, whatever it manes! There's a ratapang about the sound of it, like the crashing of engines! Am I right in me 'pingun, gintlemen?"

"What do it mane though, Hugh?" gasped Sporeen. "Crash Injuns I'd Or Abbey Muss Take War! Do I take it? Turn around an' learn it to me!"

"*Cras ingens iterabimus æquor!*" said Hugh, writing it down and handing it to Sporeen, who, after half-a-dozen attempts, repeated it correctly; for he had served mass when a boy, and thus learned how to catch the sounds of Latin, which he neither knew how to spell nor to interpret.

"I votes for it," said Sporeen, taking out his watch. "'Tis twinty minnits to twelve an' she's due at half twelve. There's no time to learn off another anyway. But where'll we turn around an' work it in? How can we make th' insertion?"

"This way, Sporeen," said Hugh, writing the following sentence on a slip of paper, which he gave to Sporeen, who read it aloud: "The flower of our race are exiled in the greater Ireland beyond the seas, but we at home, who perhaps *cras ingens iterabimus æquor*, bid you welcome to our midst in their name as well as in our own."

"Bloody good! Slashing! Rattling! Spanking! Great, great, great! I'm proud o' you, Hugh! Crash

engine! Open, Ringwood, boy! Hack forry!" cried Roland Glenpower, clapping his hands.

"'Tis a nate case in point," said Maurice Sawnuch.

"Begor, Mr. O'Dowla," said Sporeen, "you have raisin to be proud o' yer second son. Sure 'tisn't because he's present I says it, for I'd turn around an' say the very same behind his back, that's God's truth!"

"Ejjication is knowledge and knowledge is power, an' power manes money, what?" cried O'Pollards. "They's a boost for yer adderess now, Sporeen! What?"

"I always knew 'twas in Oweneen!" cried Mr. Wegless. "Many the drain o' sweetened porter I gave him long ago! D'ye see that now?"

Mr. Wegless was referring to a period when he occupied a small public-house, and several years before he removed to his present palatial emporium for the sale of intoxicating liquors by retail without food. The gratuitous draughts of porter which Mr. Wegless had then given to the little boy, proved unfortunately to be well-invested capital, for Hugh was now a liberal patron of Wegless's, unknown to his parents, and apparently unknown to Mr. Wegless, who was too astute a publican to make any freedom with his customers.

After the corrections had been made, with Hugh's assistance, it was decided that John O'Dowla, whom Sporeen furnished with a rosette, should head the deputation, as the senior Town Commissioner and Guardian present, and that Sporeen should read the address. Hugh O'Dowla meanwhile, slipped out unnoticed and sought refuge in his bedroom, for he felt as if his brain were on fire.

Then the party set out for the railway station, waddling along the flags like men with wooden legs. So strange did they feel with their rosettes, and so oppressively conscious were they of the unaccustomed task before them, that they seemed to have forgotten how to walk.

On their way, they had to pass the door of The Club, where Colonel Tirrany, Mr. Benmore, Mr. Porterson, and several country gentlemen from the surrounding districts were standing. It was a trying ordeal, and the deputation began to feel shaky. John O'Dowla took off his hat

deferentially when he came in front of the group of gentlemen and looked down at his boots. All the others, except Sporeen, did likewise, and the salute was returned.

"I calls thim nobs *Misther* just to keep 'um at a distance from me," said Sporeen sarcastically, "but I'll never have it said that the lafe o' me hat is worn like a farmer's from salutin' the landlord. Och, och! Ye're a bloody pack o' cringing slaves! What do ye care about thim fellas, what? Ye're quare pathriots!"

"'Tis well to cultivate the good opinion of the aristocracy, young Sporeen!" said John O'Dowla. "I care as little for 'em as you, but appearances must be kept up."

"'Twould be fitter for ye to crayse yeer trowserses," sneered Sporeen. "I'm th' oany man among ye wid a craysed trowsers. But see all thim nobs have their trowsers craysed."

"Manners, I call it," said Glenpower, ignoring Sporeen's sartorial dissertation. "They took off their hats to me, before I did it to them."

"Ah, but I saluted first, d'ye see," said O'Dowla proudly.

"I think none o' them shoneens [8] above me!" went on Glenpower, ignoring O'Dowla's remark. "I holds meself aiqual to the Queen in fairity! I'm descinded from the first Norman settlers who became more Irish than th' Irish themselves. All me seed, breed an' gineration were gintlemin before thim jackeens' forefathers were pot-claners to Cromwell!"

"Or foremothers, may be, if you put it to that! What?" chimed in O'Pollards.

"I respects Mr. Binmore and Mr. Porterson, d'ye see," said Mr. Wegless, the publican; "but the rest of 'em are is poor is meself, a hungry lot! Gets only a quart o' whisky at the time! D'ye see that now?"

"'Pon-me-'onour jackeens, toadies, sycophants!" cried Roland. "The divil be in the dices but only they saluted me first, I wouldn't salute them, the pon-me-'onour jackeens!"

Just then a large, ragged, bareheaded, barefooted boy, nicknamed "The Badger," who made his living mainly by holding horses for gentlemen at the Club door, ran

along and shouted out: "Down with the Land Layguers!"

There was a burst of laughter from the Club door, led off by old Colonel Tirrany, who threw a sixpence to "The Badger."

"If I thought you were put up to it, Badger, I'd turn around an' slit your throat from air to air!" hissed Sporeen.

"Can it be that public opinion is against us, d'ye see?" asked Mr. Wegless with hesitation.

"See here, you hang-gallus robber," said John O'Dowla, "I'll have you put into the reformatory."

But the boy only grinned and stuck out his tongue, crying aloud: "O'Dowla, the Rowla, the high cock Bowla!"

"Look here, ye caday, I tell you what, I'll turn around an' get y' put on the treadmill for this!" cried Sporeen, shaking his roll of foolscap at the street arab, who only laughed at his rage and called out: "Baffety, baff! Baffy, the daffy, the high cock Baffy!"

Again the sound of laughter was heard from the Club and from both sides of the street, for "Baff" was the nickname by which Sporeen, the draper, was more frequently called than by his surname.

"Mr. O'Dowla," said Sporeen, "I tell you what! I tell you an' all th' other Guarjians here how ye'll turn around an' settle that thief, if ye has any respect aither for me or yeerself. Stop his mother's outdoor relief, the next board day!"

"A tip-top case in point!" exclaimed Sawnuch. "If I had a hoult of him I wouldn't lave much offal on him."

"That I will, amossa!" cried John O'Dowla. "She's allowed four shillings a week for breedin' blackguards like him, is she? The Board should put a stop to it."

"I hasn't the name o' bein' skeerd,[9] d'ye see, but, is a ratepayer, I protist aginst it!" said Mr. Wegless.

The people were now thronging to second mass and a crowd soon collected on both sides of the street. The wrath of the deputation was extreme; but after a private consultation it was decided that, as all the policemen had

gone to the railway station, there was nothing to be done but to smother their feelings and proceed.

They waddled on sheepishly, their enthusiasm damped and the fine edge taken off their vain-glorious fervour.

Mr. O'Brile parted company with them at his own door, saying that he wanted to get his stick and would join them at the station. He was deterred from doing so by the crowd, and did not once again come into contact with them during the day.

When the deputation came in sight of the railway station, they found a great concourse of people assembled on the road. The Mahernacrow fife-and-drum band was playing " O'Donnell Aboo " ; and the Furzey Valley brass band played " The Irish Washerwoman " simultaneously. In the opinion of the crowd, Gallowglass, as the chief town of the barony, should also have been represented by a band ; and, therefore, the Gallowglass deputation, instead of being welcomed, found their progress impeded by the malcontents.

" Make way there, ye cawbogues,[10] a body would think the flags belonged to ye ! " exclaimed John O'Dowla, pushing one of the distillery backloftsmen out of his path.

" Yerra, a body 'ud think they blanged to yerself ! " retorted the workman.

" I'll report ye to Mr. Benmore, y' cawbogue ! " snapped John O'Dowla, working his way forwards.

At length, in single file, with Sporeen leading the way, they reached the entrance to the station and found the door closed against them. In front of it were drawn up fifty policemen in line, two deep, with arms grounded, in command of Mr. Dudge, S.I., and Mr. Tom Marcsburrow, R.M., who had just returned from Dublin, whither he had been summoned for a consultation with the officials at the Castle.

In response to a prolonged knocking and several hard kicks, the stationmaster informed the deputation that they could not be admitted.

" You'll have to turn around an' admit us ! " cried Sporeen. " I sees the Mahernacrow min inside the railings ; an' are the Town Commissioners an' Poor Law Guarjians

o' Gallowglass to be kep out? We're going to prisint an adderess to Mr. Fireframe."

"See! Open the door this minute, or I'll cart all me goods from the city in future instead o' bringin' 'em be rail!" cried John O'Dowla.

After some parley the door was opened and the deputation forced its way in. The platform was already full to overflowing, the younger men balancing themselves on its very edge like alighting pigeons. The Mahernacrow deputation wore green and gold sashes outside their coats, and amongst them were Dick Quisk, Moss Scarlant, and Donoghue Spilltan already under the influence of liquor.

"Well, that kills me dead!" cried Sporeen. "I see three Gallowglass min turnin' around an' takin' sides wid Mahernacrow! Lay me lone after that!"

"Shame!" said Roland Glenpower, "a man should stick to his own parish on an occasion like this! I'm out o' me own parish meself, but that's no matter, 'tis for the sake o' the cause!"

"That drunken blaguard o' mine 'll get the road for it," said John O'Dowla, fixing his gaze on Donoghue.

"There must be licensed houses open down street already, d'ye see, an' not for *bona-fide* travellers nayther. D'ye see that now?" said Mr. Wegless, growing impatient at the thought that, if he had stayed at home, he might now be doing a trade with impunity seeing that all the police were drawn up outside the station.

Sporeen looked at his watch: "'Tis half twelve. She's jew, she's jew!" he bawled out, adding in a lower tone: "Wasn't it bloody well I turned around an' gev ye the rosettes, what? Don't ye see the sashes o' the Mahernacrow fellas?"

"We'd be nowhere athout 'em!" said Roland.

"They give us great presstidge undoubtedly," said John O'Dowla.

Sporeen collected his deputation and said: "Now, see here, here's the train, here she is, I hears the whistle. She's comin', she's comin'! Watch at her, how she twists around Carrigawn bind, you'd swear she was barely crawlin'!" Sporeen was foaming at the mouth.

"The headless coach!" said Mr. Wegless sententiously. "I wonders, d'ye see, there isn't a priest here in case of accident."

"What? They'll be an accident, I guess, af they don't keep back! What?" cried O'Pollards.

"Devil mend 'em," said John O'Dowla, "'twould be no loss to the country if half o' them Mahernacrow blackguards were under the wheels, God forgive me!"

"Listen! Keep yeer eye on me! Whin I sees the compartmint he's in, I'll turn around an' make a dart for it an' we'll try to have the first word with him. Lave ye clear all before ye an' turn around an' folly me!" cried Sporeen, holding the roll of foolscap aloft.

A loud explosion was then heard, followed by another and another.

"J! They're lavin' off fog signals!" cried Sporeen. "I never thought of it. The divil wouldn't be in it wid some of um! But never mind! Keep yeer eyes on me, I sees him!"

The train came slowly in, whistling as it drew near to warn the enthusiasts from the edge of the platform. When the engine came alongside a wild rush was made for the cab of the locomotive, where stood the driver and fireman, and, as the train glided slowly onward, the crowds clung to the windows and steps of the carriages while another horde ran round behind and besieged the windows at the off side of the train. The confusion was demoniacal; and, in the midst of it, as the engine glided up letting off her over-press of steam with deafening noise, Donoghue Spilltan was seen on the coal-box staggering about amid the great lumps of coal, waving a laurel bough.

Suddenly he disappeared and there were cries of "He's dead!" "He's cut to bits!" "Sind for a priest!" "Alalew!" "God preserve us!"

The train moved on amidst uproarious cheering inside and outside the station. The bands were playing different tunes, and the kettle-drummers and cymbal men, casting time to the winds, were beating a tattoo on their own account, determined only on increasing the din.

"There he is! Watch! Cling to me!" roared Sporeen,

springing like a tiger at the door of a first-class saloon carriage where a tall gentleman, of calm, distinguished mien, with white forehead, gleaming eyes, aristocratic features and fair beard was standing with his head uncovered.

A countryman, balanced on the footboard, was clinging to the carriage window. Sporeen seized him by the collar and hauled him off. Then he dexterously opened the door, crying, "Come on, Gallowglass min!" and jumped into the carriage hat in hand, followed by most of his friends, for Mr. Fireframe's carriage was directly in front of the Gallowglass deputation when the train stopped.

"You're welcome to Gallowglass, Mr. Fireframe!" cried Sporeen, clutching the gentleman's hand and shaking it as if it were the town pump.

"Welcome, tin thousand times, Mr. Fireframe!" cried Roland, doing the same. And every member of the deputation took his turn at trying to wrench that white, nervous and blue-veined but muscular right hand from its owner's wrist. Mr. Fireframe stood erect, motionless as figure of marble, except for his gleaming eyes, which he fixed searchingly upon each hand-shaker as he took his turn.

The saloon carriage contained, besides Mr. Fireframe, Messrs. Richard O'Martyr, M.P., Thaddeus M'Swillan, M.P., and Bernard M'Coratry, M.P., who underwent the violent handshaking with the keenest relish and smiled superabundantly on the deputation.

As Gallowglass was the terminus of the line and as the saloon carriage was more comfortable than the bare waiting-room, the Leader made up his mind to receive the formal addresses in the train. His three satellites did not venture to make a suggestion of any kind.

Mr. Fireframe's silence was truly awe-inspiring to the Gallowglass men; and it seemed like speaking in a church when Sporeen said: "Mr. O'Dowla, T.C., P.L.G., Mr. Fireframe: Mr. Fireframe, Mr. O'Dowla!"

But it was a relief to all present when John O'Dowla, bowing very low, thus addressed the great Mr. Fireframe: "I welcome you to this town of Gallowglass, sir, where

your presence will give ekklatt and presstidge to our demonstration, and where your eloquence will cast oil upon the troubled waters of our beloved native land!"

The deputations from Mahernacrow, Furzey Valley, and other districts were looking in through the windows, bitterly disappointed at being compelled to give precedence to the men of Gallowglass.

Mr. Fireframe's patrician face lighted up, his fine nostrils curved, and his white teeth gleamed under his fair beard, as his voice made itself heard in Gallowglass for the first time.

Fixing his eyes upon John O'Dowla as if he were ten thousand men, the Leader said, with a face of the most serious earnestness: "Mr. O'Dowla, I thank you and your friends for giving me this welcome."

The words were uttered with such solemn slowness and distinctness that John O'Dowla quailed, having never expected that his few words would have been taken with such awful seriousness and treated as if the fate of empires depended upon them.

"We have carried the day!" went on Mr. Fireframe, looking all round the carriage; and every one quailed before his glance, even his own colleagues, just as John O'Dowla had done. "We have carried the day! We shall carry this day! And we shall carry evvra day! Until Ireland has gained the right to settle this question for herself!"

When he ceased, they cheered; and the Gallowglass men felt that, long as they had lived in the favoured town of Gallowglass, they had never been actors in a scene of such transcendent importance; even when, as jurors, they had heard the judge pass the death-sentence on a prisoner whom they had found guilty by their verdict. Even Sporeen was mesmerised; and, trembling all over, he utterly forgot the address.

"Haven't you an address for Mr. Fireframe?" asked Mr. O'Martyr, M.P., looking at the foolscap in Sporeen's hand.

"What? I beg pardon. Yes, I has, sir!" exclaimed Sporeen with a start, as if aroused out of a sound slumber.

" Pass the address to Mr. Mulleady, if you please," said Mr. M'Swillan, M.P., addressing Sporeen. " We may take it as read ! "

" Take it as read ? " shrieked Sporeen, tears starting to his eyes. " Is it after all our trouble, good God Almighty ? "

" Read your address for me, Mr. Sporeen," said Mr. Fireframe, smiling. " Let me hear what Gallowglass has to say for itself."

While the address was being read, Mr. Fireframe listened with as much intentness as a Roman Patrician, expecting death or exile, would have listened to a proscription list in the time of Sulla or Marius.

" Who perhaps *cras ingens iterabimus æquor*," and Sporeen's eyes were lifted, as if in challenge to the Leader ; but he quickly looked to earth again as if he had been scorched, for, to his amazement, no emotion was visible in Mr. Fireframe's features. The great politician's seriousness overwhelmed Sporeen, who had hitherto undertaken the presentation of addresses with such levity. He grew nervous, as it flashed across his mind that some fatal, unforeseen consequences might result from a strained, or over-serious, construction of the clauses of his address, and he bungled badly towards the close of his reading.

But his spirits revived when the Leader spoke : " I thank you, Town Commissioners and Poor Law Guardians of this thriving town of Gallowglass, for your patriotic and eloquently-worded address. I am glad the young men of Gallowglass are here to-day. It is on the young men of Ireland that the future depends. I am also pleased to find the representative citizens here in such numbers—" At these words, John O'Dowla, Sawnuch, M'Climber, O'Pollards and the others recovered their equanimity, which the reference to the " young men " had somewhat disturbed. " Later on, I shall address you at length. I thank you again for your admirably-worded address."

Then, making way for the Mahernacrow, Furzey Valley, Ballygrauver, Ballyownshuch, and other deputations, the Gallowglass men left the carriage, and, after much pushing and jostling, emerged from the railway station into the road where the policemen were drawn up.

"Well, Mr. O'Dowla," said the Sub-Inspector, "when may we expect them out?" The people were still on speaking terms with the police, and John O'Dowla touched his hat to Mr. Dudge and Mr. Maresburrow, both of whom were customers and debtors for substantial amounts. The other members of the deputation too, being all licence-holders, except Sporeen and Glenpower, saluted the authorities obsequiously.

"See! They's a crowd o' Mahernacrow vagabonds in there now, gentlemen," exclaimed John O'Dowla, "an' I'm glad I brought me life safe our their clutches. Pup, pup, pup!"

"I have just told off three men and a sergeant to look after a man that was hurt in there. Did you meet them?" asked the Sub-Inspector.

"No, sir," replied John O'Dowla, "but if the wan half of 'em inside there was killed 'twould be no great loss!"

"What is Mr. Fireframe like, John?" asked Mr. Maresburrow, R.M.

"Oh, Mr. Maresburrow, lay me lone with him," exclaimed John O'Dowla, flinging up his hands. "As ould Mr. Benmore said to the MacMade long ago when the Queen came to Cove, or Queenstown as it is ever since—'Well, Tom,' says the MacMade, 'an' what did ye think of her Majesty?' 'Well,' says Mr. Benmore, 'she's damn prepossessing for a Queen.' An' so by Mr. Fireframe, he's like a majordomo! Lord Almighty save us, I never saw such a man! Pup, pup, pup!"

The Inspector and Stipendiary laughed heartily.

At this instant Sporeen descried a body of badly-mounted horsemen from the parish of Mahernacrow drawn up forty yards away, and he exclaimed: "Mr. Glenpower, I tell you what, for the 'onner o' God, turn around an' get yer hunter an' I'll get me own mare an' we'll turn around an' ride before 'em, as a body-guard around Fireframe's carriage, to the Castle Field. Don't ye see what the divils are up to?"

The deputation separated, and John O'Dowla walked homewards, as fast as he could, to tell Mrs. O'Dowla and Julia of his adventures. The other representative citizens,

having licences for the sale of liquor, betook themselves inside their counters, where they stood at the drainers working the beer-pumps for the rest of the day, under the invocation of thirsty *bona-fide* travellers and temporary deserters from the demonstration.

Glenpower and Sporeen went for their horses; and, on the way, they heard cries of "Here's the Priest!" from a distant part of the crowd, where Donoghue Spilltan was being carried to the hospital on a door borne by four men. But so great was the confusion that nothing definite could be ascertained as to the extent of his injuries, and Sporeen would not hear of any delay for the purpose of making inquiries.

"If ye turns around an' laves any grass grow onder yeer feet, the Mahernacrow fellas 'll come inside us!" he cried.

Glenpower, on his fine weight-carrying hunter, was, next to Mr. Fireframe, the most distinguished figure in the procession. Every window in the town was full, women waved their handkerchiefs and men cheered. The congregation had just come out from second mass, and the crowds in the street were so dense that the horses could hardly move without trampling on the people.

Mrs. O'Brile and her daughters, with whom was Ignatius O'Dowla, waved their kerchiefs; and Norah O'Brile, who was called the Belle of Gallowglass, threw a bouquet into the Leader's carriage, amidst loud applause, as Mr. Fireframe passed under their window. Gallowglass cheered itself into delirium without knowing why it did so. Passing the Club, the mob hissed and groaned, at which Colonel Tirrany's face became purple; but Messrs. Benmore and Porterson only laughed, for they knew it was going to be a good day for the liquor trade.

John O'Dowla stood waving his hat on his doorstep; Mrs. O'Dowla waved her handkerchief from the drawing-room window, but Julia sat motionless by her mother's side. Mr. Fireframe was standing up in his carriage, which was drawn, not by horses, but by men. He was bareheaded, waving his hat and cheering on the people,

like a huntsman encouraging his hounds when scent is doubtful on the bawn.[11] He seemed to have caught Julia's eye. She assuredly felt transfixed by his eagle glance; for she blushed crimson, and her breast heaved with emotion. Then the procession swept past, on its way to Cahercon-lish, where a platform had been erected with planks lent by Mr. Benmore, laid upon empty tierces lent by Mr. Porterson, on the green sward of the Castle Field, which had not been ploughed within the memory of man.

[1] "How are you?"
[2] "God be with you?"
[3] "God, Mary and Patrick be with you."
[4] Promiscuously.
[5] "Fine day."
[6] A hundred thousand welcomes.
[7] Patch (usually a cobbler's).
[8] Upstarts.
[9] Greedy or stingy.
[10] Common fellow.
[11] Bawn, usually pronounced "baan," means grass land as opposed to ploughed land.

CHAPTER XX

"For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief."—PROVERBS xxiv. 2.

HUGH O'DOWLA, having attended last mass, set out for Garekiln in the hope of meeting Molly Carew, though the hour of his appointment with her was long past. Oppressed by the consciousness of his guilt and danger, he trembled like a young horse at every shadow and every dust-eddy raised by the wind, as he wended his way along the silent road. He was in terror lest his father would meet M'Gurk or some of the Garekiln men, and learn from them about the sale of the colt; he feared lest he should encounter Edward O'Brile; and even the thought of Bugler, who had been his life-long dependent, affrighted him. What if he should meet a policeman and be questioned, or perhaps arrested?

What if he should meet one of the Valiants and be summoned to another conference in the cave, at which he might be commanded to commit some crime, exceeding in turpitude even the assassination of Mr. Culvert? He had sworn to report himself at eight o'clock in the evening at a cross-roads which lay two miles from Gallowglass and a mile away from the graveyard at Kilderiheenbreeka, and he shuddered at the prospect. Whom should he meet there? What should he be required to do? Was that oath binding on him? But, even if it were not binding, the threats of the Valiants held good, and he was not prepared to die yet.

At length he was in Garekiln, and, late as he was, Molly stood waiting for him in the fort under the shadow of the Scotch firs.

Meantime, Ignatius O'Dowla was paying his customary Sunday visit to the O'Briles, being on terms of close

intimacy with the family, and an acknowledged admirer of the elder Miss O'Brile, who was a singularly attractive girl. Norah O'Brile had spent a year at the Mortification Convent as a boarder, but she had emerged from that establishment without having lost her ingrained common-sense, and, more wonderful still, with her spirit unbroken. She positively refused to go back to the custody of the nuns for a second year; and her mother, having patiently heard her account of the life led by the Convent girls, did not force her to return. Norah O'Brile had a taste for music, and, much to the displeasure of Father O'Darrell, took private lessons from the music teacher attached to Gallowglass Endowed School. She also took an interest in housekeeping; and, stranger still, in several of the businesses carried on by her father.

Ignatius, who had heard of the arrest and release of Edward O'Brile, now learned from Norah why it was that Edward had gone to Brady's Wood, and his indignation with Hugh surpassed all bounds. He had no suspicion previously of the connection between his brother and Molly Carew, and he determined to take his brother to task at their next meeting and speak his mind freely to him on the reprehensible conduct of which he had been guilty.

When the crowds had cleared out of the town and gone to Caherconlish, Ignatius O'Dowla accompanied Norah O'Brile and her younger sister, Catherine, for a drive in a handsome new trap which Mr. O'Brile had recently bought for his daughters, Ignatius driving, with Norah by his side and Catherine on the back seat. It would be hard to find a greater contrast than that afforded by the lot of the two brothers. Ignatius, self-controlled, industrious, reading steadily for his medical degree, calmly contemplating an alliance in every way suitable to his position and beneficial to his prospects. Hugh, more brilliant than his brother, but impulsive, possessed of little self-control, a slave to his passions, now sinning, anon repentant, always in terror of some impending misfortune. Ignatius, the essence of respectability and propriety, driving comfortably along the high road with Norah O'Brile

by his side, pointed out by the gossips as the most promising young man in Gallowglass, scorning contact with all who were in any respect shady or beneath himself in position. Hugh, under the Scotch firs with Molly Carew, ashamed to look in the face of heaven or of man.

Ignatius O'Dowla would not be seen in company with the Agitators, whom he regarded as responsible for the murder of Mr. Culvert and the burning of Thomas O'Brile's hayricks; and, as he drove past the Castle Field with his fair companions and beheld the crowds and heard the cheering, he smiled quietly and whipped the horse to a faster trot, having raised his hat in reply to a profound salute from his father. Edward O'Brile saw Ignatius and his sisters as they flitted past, for he was among the crowd listening to the speeches and enjoying the excitement, his eyes ever keenly on the look-out for Hugh O'Dowla; and Daniel O'Rourke, *alias* Bugler, was not far off.

No more romantic spot could have been selected for the preaching of a new gospel. The square grey castle, whose massive walls projected at the base like the ram of a battleship, rose picturesquely amidst its own gardens and outbuildings, and occupied the entire width of the Castle Field. Great elms, of immemorial age, enclosed the field on the right and left, while the fourth side was bounded by a low wall abutting on the high road which ran parallel to the line of the castle frontage. The structure was a mosaic of grey limestone turning white with age and spotted in various shades of green and brown by the moss and lichen. A large diagonal area of the front was covered with old ivy, some of the stalks of which were as thick as twenty-year-old tree trunks.

The platform had been erected against the castle wall and was surrounded by a densely-packed mass of people, but, as the field sloped upwards to the road, those on the outskirts of the crowd could plainly see and hear the speakers.

So confined was the Castle Field on every side except that abutting on the road, that it resembled an open air theatre; and every word spoken from the platform rang out with great distinctness.

The largest farmers took no active part in the demonstration, but many of them came to look on; standing together or sitting in a group on the road-fence, where they could see and hear distinctly, and yet feel that they stood aloof from the proceedings.

They were as yet rather against the Fireframe agitation, for their savings had enabled them to weather the first fall in prices and shortness of the harvests. They were almost all related to each other by blood or marriage, and, if they had stood together and were possessed of more commercial acumen, might have come through the hard times triumphantly.

"That Fireframe is a clane-skinned man," roared Laurence Flauhool, commonly called Lar Moor, the largest farmer in the barony, whether judged by his acres or his personal dimensions, as he stood on the fence supporting himself with his hazel stick: "Damn little signs or tokens o' work I sees about him."

John O'Dowla, though looked down upon as a mere shopkeeper by the larger farmers, stood near the group, determined to be in the same boat with those men of substance, and laughed aloud at Flauhool's witticism.

"Would he know a butt o' good dung from thrash!" cried old Tom Cuddahy, Roland Glenpower's father-in-law.

"I has me doubts about him an' his cummerades!" bellowed Maurice Mahone, who was also Cuddahy's son-in-law, and was the farmer most noted throughout the barony for the "full and plenty" of his table.

"Heisht a vyol!" cried Flauhool, whose wife was a niece of Cuddahy's, "what's that he's praychin' now?"

The steel-ringing voice of Mr. Fireframe came up to them distinctly: "I do not blame the landlord so much to take all the rent he can get," said Mr. Fireframe. "It is the man who causes the rent to be raised by rushing in redhot after the eviction; it is the man who bids an exorbitant price for the vacant farm, who deserves to be denounced as the enemy of his kind. The land-grabber must be throttled before we can hope to bring the landlord garrison to its knees."

Loud groans and hisses, with cries of "Down with the Grabbers," "Down with Tom Brile," "Boycott him!" filled the Castle Field; and the large farmers moved uneasily as they heard.

"He don't blame the big fellas for takin' the rint an' doin' nauthin,' 'tis us he blames that works like horses late an' airly!" cried old Tom Cuddahy.

"The curse o' the crows on him! What 'ud he have?" cried Flauhool. "Do he want the land kep' idle? I has four farms meself an' I got 'em all be outbiddin' the highest bidder an' I makes me livin', as all the parish sees, where others were in poverty an' rags!"

"Here's the same!" bellowed Maurice Mahone. "His langidge is bad, an' trouble 'll come of it."

"Public opinion is with him. Pup, pup, pup!" said John O'Dowla.

"What do I care?" cried old Tom Cuddahy, glaring angrily at John O'Dowla. "Not the black o' me nail! Who's cheerin' but the riff-raff, the lazy, drunken angashores and the labourers that expex houses an' half acres for nauthin'. Thau gu braw![1] Sky-high I tosses public opinion if that's what it manes. The push-och-wee!"[2]

"I sees Roland Glenpower there a horseback," roared Flauhool. "He's no fool, though he does be talkin' a sight o' raamaysh![3] 'Tis huntin' he have on the brain, not politics; an' he's afeerd they'd stop the huntin' on him, if he didn't give in wid 'em, and subshcribe."

"Anybody 'd do the same, if he got a hundred or two apiece for his horses!" said John O'Dowla.

"I kills six turkeys durin' Christmas!" roared Maurice Mahone, "and six fat lambs about Aister: as fast is a sheep is ate, another is slaughtered, an' many the fat stripper besides, in me yard at Knockakoo. Ne'er a poor body ever passed me door impty; an' I'm a grabber, am I?"

"You are, Murrish, an' so am I be the same tokens!" cried Flauhool. "I pays thirty-two-and-six an acre for Spellassy's place. I had fifteen acres of barley there this year an' it threshed twelve barrels to th' acre at sixteen shillings a barrel, that's nine pound twelve an acre widout

the straw. I cut three ton o' hay to th' acre off the inches at three pound a ton, an' had aftergrass besides, an' I had twinty head o' young stock on it all the year, besides a month's grass for me thirty head o' milk's cows, an' there isn't better green crops in Killafastare than I has there. Was I going to lose that for wan and thrippence an acre ? That was th' amount I exsayded the next bid ! "

" An' we all knows poor Dan Shmeddy was broke in it, an' et nothing but Injy male stirabout an' praties an' sour milk ! " cried Mahone, " an used to pluck his live geese after harvest, to sell the goose-down."

" See ! I say rent is nothing, if the land is good an' a body keeps his eyes an' airs open ! " said John O'Dowla. " The road to wealth is as straight before a man as the road to church. Industry an' frugality is all that's wanted. Pup, pup, pup ! "

" What do you know about land, ye huxtereen ? " roared old Tom Cuddahy. " You never knew what full an' plinty was in yer rearin' ! "

" Why wouldn't I know it, ye cawbogue ? " retorted John O'Dowla. " I have a better farm than any o' ye at Garekiln."

" The cobbler should stick to his last ! " yelled Flauhool.

" Af he did, land wouldn't be so high," bellowed Mahone.

The stragglers in the neighbourhood of the large farmers were influenced by the conversation and listened open-mouthed.

" Heisht ! " cried Cuddahy, " he's alloodin' to the murder ! " Then they heard Mr. M'Swillan say : " Villainously as you have been trodden under foot by the landlords, aided by British bayonets and these black-coated renegades of Irishmen whom I see here in such force to-day—(cries of ' Harvey Duff ! ' [4] and ' Down with the Peelers '). Villainously, I repeat, as you have been treated in this, our grand old country, still I should be disposed to regret this murder, and, a, rather to condemn this murder, for such things, a, tell against us in England. The effect on a sensitive public opinion at the other side, across the water, a, that is, perhaps, my chief reason for regretting it. You must remember O'Connell's words :

'The man that commits a crime gives strength to the enemy.' But though I say so much, I am not oblivious to the fact that while thousands of Brede O'Grogans are dead in their paupers' graves, and thousands of Mrs. Pinkerrys in the workhouses, the grabbers who stepped into their holdings are living and thriving in Gallowglass and elsewhere, holding their heads high, and fattening on their country's misery. Mrs. Pinkerry's holding is, I am informed, in the hands of a Mr. O'Brile. Is he here to-day? ('No, no,' and cries of 'Boycott him!') I pass from this subject. Now let me take a broad survey of the political horizon, and as it were attempt to cast the horoscope of this beloved old land of ours, this old-time island of saints and scholars."

"I'm very glad my father isn't here!" said Edward, who stood amongst the horsemen, close to the platform.

"'Twould be better for him if he was," said Sporeen, bending down to whisper in his ear. "If he was jig be jowl with Fireframe up there, or if he turned around an' gev a good subscription or anything like that, not a word o' that codology would be heard."

"My mother must have kept him at home," said Edward, looking deeply pained.

But Mrs. O'Brile had not kept her husband at home. He was in the Castle Field at that moment, leaning against an elm-tree on the outskirts of the crowd smoking his pipe. He started when he heard Mr. M'Swillan's allusion to himself, and striking his pipe against his boot to conceal his emotion, knocked its contents out upon the grass. He then put his hands behind his back and walked in amongst the elms, where he paced to and fro in the shade. He determined to go home at once and tell his wife what had been said, and he took the shortest cut to Gallowglass, along the banks of the millstream which worked Benmore's distillery.

"Huh! huh!" grunted Mahone on the road-fence, where, for some moments, there was dead silence amongst the large farmers.

"Divil skewrt [5] to ye now, ye cawbogues, take that!" cried John O'Dowla, addressing Flauhool and the others,

for none of them dealt in his shop. "An' with that I give ye the back o' me hand!" So saying he walked down the Castle Field, and, pushing his way through the crowd, never ceased until he clambered up on the platform beside the speakers. In this he was guided more by instinct than by reason. Something told him that trouble was coming, and he fled to range himself amongst the doers rather than take his stand with the probable sufferers.

When John O'Dowla got on the platform, he found himself wedged in amongst the wildest ne'er-do-wells from Mahernacrow, and his first thought was one of regret at having left the company of the men of substance on the road-fence, deeply though they had offended him.

"Here, Mr. O'Dowla," cried Dick Quisk, catching him by the coat collar, "Mr. Mulleady is wantin' you to propose a resolution."

And several other wild Mahernacrow men gathered round John O'Dowla and pushed him forward to the front of the platform. The resolution was one condemning land-grabbing, and John would much rather not have proposed it. But Mr. Fireframe's eye was on him, and before him extended a shrieking, cursing, hooting, perspiring, crowd of humanity, equally ready to cheer or hiss, equally prepared for an ovation or an outrage.

John O'Dowla saw that it was impossible to recede without incurring loss of popularity, and, perhaps, running the risk of injury to his person or property. With parched lips and trembling limbs, he, therefore, proposed the resolution, and spoke a few words into which the two mottoes "Speech is silver but silence is gold" and "Cast oil upon the troubled waters" were irrelevantly introduced. He was loudly cheered, and his neighbours on the platform slapped him roughly on the back by way of congratulating him, until he went into a fit of coughing which threatened him with suffocation.

He was just beginning to recover his breath when two Mahernacrow young men roughly caught him by the shoulders, saying: "Come here, an' propose a vote o' thanks to Mr. Fireframe, Mr. O'Dowla."

"See! Get off! Lay me go, ye blackguards!" he cried, planting himself more firmly against the castle wall. But they laid violent hands on him and pulled him forward.

"How bashful you are!" said one.

"'Tis yer place, sure, you're the most representative man on the platform!" said the other.

"I'll go meself, if it is! Lay me out!" he replied, equally amenable to flattery and coercion.

They made a passage for him through the crowd and he found himself again under Mr. Fireframe's eye, surrounded by the bewildering sea of faces, and addressing the MacMade of Madestown. What he said he knew not. But when Mr. Fireframe rose to reply there was no one more amazed than John O'Dowla at hearing the following words: "Men of Gallowglass, men of Killafastare, it is not with a mere hackneyed expression of my thanks that I shall pass over this vote which you have moved to me (loud cheering). I shall not pass it over in that way (cheers). We are now beginning a struggle with England, with those English coercionists, which will decide the fate of Ireland for many years; and I require sterling Irishmen returned to stand at my back in the English Parliament when I rise there, in open hostility to both and all English parties, Liberal as well as Tory, to demand justice for Ireland (loud cheers). I need unflinching Irishmen at my back (cheers)—at my back; and I mean those Irishmen, those Irish members of Parliament as they will be, to be men of the people, men of your own kith and kin, men like yourselves (cheers). I see several men here on this platform to-day who would make admirable representatives (cheers) for this great constituency in an English Parliament, but there is only one seat, I regret to say (oh!). Therefore I think I can follow no safer guide in selecting my nominee, Ireland's nominee, the choice of the people, than the guide and indication of seniority, of capacity, of representative position, and of common-sense (loud cheers). I therefore announce to this public meeting that if Mr. John O'Dowla consents to come forward for his country's cause at the next election,

and I am sure a man possessing such a high sense of public duty will feel himself called upon to do so, I therefore announce that if he does, his candidature has my sanction and the sanction of the Irish people (cheers, screaming and brandishing of sticks). I make no doubt you will be glad to be rid of the white-livered ninny, the hermaphrodite who has misrepresented this great and enlightened constituency (groans). I make no doubt Benmore would be a suitable person for the office of Resident Magistrate, when he has been kicked out of the representation of Gallowglass, and in saying so, I feel I could use no more contemptuous language about any man" (hisses).

The Benmore here referred to was a ne-er-do-well brother of the distiller, and the needy father of a numerous family. He drew an annuity from the business, and had been put into Parliament by his brother's influence, in order to give him some occupation and to keep him out of the distillery.

"Let the men of Gallowglass be true to me," continued Mr. Fireframe, "and I shall be true to them." (Great enthusiasm, manifested by whistling, waving of blackthorns, cheers, curses and general commotion.)

John O'Dowla now found himself confronting Mr. Fireframe and receiving general congratulations from the wildest bloods of Mahernacrow, and heard a motion being hurriedly proposed, seconded and unanimously carried, pledging "the voters of Gallowglass, in public meeting assembled," to return Mr. John O'Dowla, T.C., P.L.G., triumphantly at the poll, at the next election, as "the nominee of the Leader of the Irish race at home and abroad and chosen delegate of the people."

Then the meeting broke up, and there was a general stampede from the platform, just as if the Castle Field were Gallowglass chapel and Father O'Darrell had commenced the *De Profundis*. The labourers, in their Sunday coats of black or gray frieze and soft broad-brimmed felt hats, leaped over the fences of the Castle Field and headed for Gallowglass, faster than if it had been a working day and the dinner bell had rung. They raced half-walking, half-trotting, in thirsty groups along the dusty limestone

road, eager for the frothy porter which they could see in their mind's eye oozing from the weeping tierces on the stellans [6] in the cool public-houses.

"I likes that John M'Swillan, or whatsomever ye calls him, he have a very grauver way o' fouldin' his arms that takes me greatly," cried Arnill; "but I heard noan o' fwhat he said, but I'm sure 'twas great!"

"Great!" cried O'Larey. "He ain't a patch upon O'Marthr. Did ye twig the way he used to bate wan fist aggin the hollow o' th' other at every succund word? He's me darlin', so he is! Boys, haven't he a roar in airnest?"

"That M'Coratry might be a good spaker, too, but he got no fair play in the heel o' the hunt wid the bands, but, fwhin all is sed'n dun, Fireframe himself bangs Banagher, he's so tough and wiry in himself laving it out like a piece of a soogawn," [7] roared Arnill at the top of his voice.

"Fot he said 'll be took up too!" cried Dick Quisk.

"Wisha, dawreera?" said O'Larey in surprise.

"Heisht!" said Arnill. "Heisht-a-vyol, till ye passes the big fellas. Watch Lar Flauhooil an' the rest of 'em standing on the fince!" To Arnill's mind Flauhool and Mahone were "big fellows," while in Flauhool's opinion Mr. Benmore, Mr. Porterson, and the Land Agent were the "big fellows."

"Watch at 'em now," roared Lar Flauhool, pointing his stick at the hurrying mob. "Watch how they stirs theirselves! Could anything onder heaven but porther make 'em so lively?"

"That it mightn't do 'em good!'" screamed Maurice Mahone.

"Ye big fellas takes it yeerself, Mr. Mahone!" said Bill Arnill.

"An' plinty grog besides!" yelled O'Larey.

"Out wid ye, buddochs! [8] Dirt o' me shoe!" roared old Tom Cuddahy.

"'Tis the half acre ye wants for nauthin!" bellowed Mahone.

"Wait till I sees yeer pusses in the mornin', crawlin' to

yeer work, ye slinjers!" shouted Lar Flauhool, shaking his stick at some of his own workmen whom he saw rushing on with the stream towards Gallowglass.

"Down with the Grabbers!" cried several.

"Thau gu braw!" roared Lar Flauhool.

"An' up wid th' idlers an' cadays!" bellowed Maurice Mahone.

"Yerra, nobbeen bowra, Mr. Flohoo-ill!" cried Arnill. "Keep a civil tongue in yer head from this day out!"

"Thaw Morra va gutt, Lar Moor!" shouted O'Larey.

"I'm gaspin' wid the drought," muttered Bugler. "I hears the big fellas 'll have lashin's t' ate an' drink up at th' hotel. 'Tis aisy for 'em to prache an' make spaches whin they knows they's plinty beer waitin' for 'em after! I'd listen to their jaw for a week if I had the same prospects at the ind of it." By the phrase "big fellows," Daniel O'Rourke meant the Members of Parliament.

"Sha guddeeruch!"[9] replied Arnill.

"Did any o' ye see Master Hugh to-day?" asked O'Rourke.

"I didn't put eyes on him," said Arnill, "nor none o' the min here nayther. 'Tisn't o' this kind of work the young man does be thinkin'. Af I wanted to find him I'd make a cast elsewhere."

John O'Dowla was slipping away quietly under the elms, intending to take the short cut into town by the banks of the mill-stream.

"Half-past four!" he exclaimed, looking at his watch. "Herself can call me late for the praties in earnest to-day. Pup, pup, pup, my God Almighty!"

Several others were coming by the mill-stream bank as well as he, so that he was not surprised at hearing the steps of men running behind him. But he was exceedingly surprised on finding himself clutched by the shoulder and ordered to "Hould aisy, Mr. O'Dowla," by a young wildfire from Mahernacrow who said: "You must come to dinner at the hotel, Mr. O'Dowla. They's a comitay of us intertainin' the mimbers, an' there 'ud be remarks passed if the future mimber wasn't present!"

"Past! Future! Present!" cried John O'Dowla.

ROLAND GLENPOWER ON HORSEBACK

"Roland Glenpower drew rein in front of them, mounted on his splendid hunter, and John O'Dowla, cheered by the sight of a respectable friend, reluctantly consented to accompany them." p. 250.

"See! I never heard a word about it, man. I must ate me own dinner first, I'm half-an-hour late for it as it is!"

"Sure you can ate with the Mimbers!" said several others who also belonged to the committee.

John O'Dowla was taken aback by the superior force which surrounded him, and, in order to avoid being roughly handled, he conditionally assented to attend the banquet. Mr. Fireframe had not been slow to detect the weaknesses in O'Dowla's character; and that famous man had selected him as candidate for Gallowglass because he hoped to find in O'Dowla an obedient voting machine.

"I never ate a dinner out o' me own house, except what I take at the farm every day, an' I'm not going to biggen now when a good Sunday dinner is waiting on the table for me, am I?" said John O'Dowla, wiping his eyes.

"But you must, sir!" they said. "Mr. Fireframe sint us to say he desires you to be present!"

"'Twould be very onpatriotic not to come, Mr. O'Dowla!" said another. "Mr. Glenpower is comin'. Look, if yc don't blee me, here he's stepping towards us!"

Roland Glenpower drew rein in front of them, mounted on his splendid hunter, and John O'Dowla, cheered by the sight of a respectable friend, reluctantly consented to accompany them.

"'Twill be the first time I ever did the like," said John O'Dowla; "an' see, I'd never be induced to do it, only for the respect I have for Mr. Fireframe, so I wouldn't! Tw-oh, tw-oh!"

"Take a sate in the wagnette, Mr. O'Dowla," they urged.

"Pup, pup, pup! I never hired a car, nor joined in hirin' a car in me life," said John O'Dowla. "I'll walk to Gallowglass, as I always did."

They only laughed at him: "That's how you made yer money, sir. The world knows you're a crabbit[10] man. But you'll have to take a sate. Do you think we'd be drivin' it at our aize an' our future mimber vampin' it?"

"I walk over two thousand miles every year o' me

life," said John O'Dowla; "that's about seven miles a day, not counting Sundays. I'm doin' that at least this thirty years, an' see, I never stopped any wan on the road to ask 'em for a lift—unless they offered it to me."

"You're a slashing cut of a man, John. I wander your wife is so unsuspectin' as to lave y' out be yerself for all that roadwork an' travelling," said Roland Glenpower, putting his hunter at the nearest fence and galloping off across the country.

Amidst the general laugh that ensued, John was hustled back to the Castle Field and given a seat of honour in M'Climber's wagonette, which was driven in procession next to Mr. Fireframe's carriage up the Main Street of Gallowglass to the Gallowglass Arms Hotel. On both sides of the street, riotous crowds filled the side-walks, batches going into and coming out of the public-houses where porter was being consumed by the tierce, cheers being given as the carriage and brakes passed by. John entreated his companions to stop the wagonette and let him call at his own house to tell his wife that he would not be in for dinner; but they, fearing that Mrs. O'Dowla would not let him out again, shouted him down and whipped up the horses to a gallop.

Mrs. O'Dowla and Julia were surprised at John's absence from dinner. "I'll lave that dinner laid is it is on that tablecloth without is much is liftin' a dish cover until he comes home if it was twelve o'clock to-night!" said Mrs. O'Dowla, sitting down by the window to eat a slice of bread and butter and to indulge her misery in full view of her townsfolk.

"Ignatius will have a word to say to that," said Julia. "He'll be in soon."

Scarcely had Mrs. O'Dowla seated herself when the approach of Mr. Fireframe's carriage was heralded by the shouting in the street. Julia went to the window and once again concentrated her gaze on the handsome face of the Leader. But Mrs. O'Dowla, fixing her eyes on the wagonette, saw her husband in company with Mahernacrow men whom she had always heard him denounce as "cadays" and paupers with whom respectable

folk should be ashamed to keep company. It is no exaggeration to say that Mrs. O'Dowla was speechless with astonishment.

It is equally true to record that Julia was speechless also, but from a different cause. She had endeavoured to take a mental photograph of Mr. Fireframe by staring at him, and was now trying to fix the impression of his features on her retina, as persons by staring at the setting sun can see him still after he has gone below the horizon, but in subdued colours and with diminished glory.

When the vehicles had passed and the cheering had completely subsided, Mrs. O'Dowla exclaimed: "Well, I never thought I'd live to see this day! Did you see your father, girl?"

"No, mother, I did not," replied Julia sharply.

"Didn't ye see him in the wagonette with the lowest o' the low an' the worst o' bad pays?"

"Mother," said Julia, "I avoid seeing low things. I saw the only man I ever saw that realises my ideal of what a man should be, the only man, I repeat, who reconciles me to the existence of the male branch of the human species! I had eyes for nothing else!"

"Alillu! Alillu!" said Mrs. O'Dowla, smacking her lips, and not displeased at finding that there was even one man on earth admired by her daughter. "There's the first goose this year, as fine a bird as ever I saw, roasted and stuffed under that cover, and the piece o' bacon restin' in the cabbage 'twas boiled in, an' the potatoes. An' they's his bottle o' stout, unopened, an' they's the rice puddin' in the oven, an' they's the tray ready with the makin's of his punch after dinner. An' as I said before, an' as I repeat again, there they're there, an' there they'll stay, if it was till twelve this blessed night, until he comes in an' sees the results of his company-keeping. I'll lerrn him to waste food agin!"

"Dinner waiting!" exclaimed Ignatius. "I apologise for being late!"

"'Tis now five," said Julia, looking at her watch, "and if papa isn't here at quarter-past five sharp, I'll ask you to cut off my slice of breast, Naishy, and give me a help

of stuffing just as usual. You'll cut it for me, won't you, for I can't bear handling knives ? "

" Why then, girl, have y' any heart, or is it a gizzard you has ? " asked Mrs. O'Dowla, munching a mouthful of bread and butter.

Just then the parlour door was pushed open and Roland's head and shoulders appeared, and were followed after an interval by the rest of his body.

" Hallo, Mrs. O'Dowla, you'll excuse me for sayin' it in th' absence o' yer husband, but, divil be from me, if I saw such a slochter,[11] grauver,[12] spanking cut of a woman as yerself during the whole day ! Gospel fact, Julia ! Gospel fact, doctor, I hope you're well."

" Quite well, thank you, Roland," replied Ignatius, smiling.

" Why thin, Roland, 'tis on a troubled woman you're looking this minute ! " said Mrs. O'Dowla. " Is John drunk ? "

" He's not, ma'am," said Roland, " but if I was in his place I'd be staggerin' an' I wouldn't go home till morning ! I wish you joy, ma'am, and, blood-a-nouns, just gimme wan shake o' yer hand so that I can have it to say to me wife when I goes home that I shook hands with a rattling cut of a woman an' the wife of a mimber o' Parliment ! "

" What do you mean to convey ? " asked Ignatius.

" What rubbish you talk, Roland ! " exclaimed Julia.

" Rubbish ! I wasn't aware convent-bred ladies used such language. But to come to the point, ladies, didn't ye hear the news ? John O'Dowla is selected be Mr. Fireframe, whose word is law in such matters, an' deservedly so, for, though divil a word I heard o' what he said, still I endorse it, for a man with his pair of eyes, so piercin' as if he could see straight—no exaggeration—straight to the throne o' God, I ax God's pardon, couldn't dissave people if he tried—Steady, where was I ? Begor I must make a cast ! Excuse me, Mrs. O'Dowla, but to come to the point, for I am a great fella for flashin' like lightnin' to the rale marrow of an argument when I hears other fellows batin' about the bush an' foopawing while

scent is getting cold, hounds running slack and game slipping away, slap at it, straight ahead for me; over it whatever it is, wired fence, begor, or horse an' butt across the road—you laugh as if you didn't blee me—I take me Bible oath this minute I jumped the gray horse I bought from Lar Flohooill over a butt on the road wanst an' a woman setting in it."

"Roland," said Julia, "remember what you're talking about."

"Right! Right! Just so!" shouted Roland, as if he thought Julia was going to speak him down. "It escaped me mimory for a moment. Where was I? Yes, just so! I'm coming to the point! The fox was lost an' I was making a circular cast as I always do an' always did, Mrs. O'Dowla, begor, before ever I had a hound, I used to do it when huntin' rats with me twenty-six tarriers as a boy!—Ye smile! Fact though, positive fact—though I never heard a huntsman or wan that followed hounds opening his lips in me life at the time, I assure ye, as sure as I'm standing here—Aisy, where was I? Yes, I'm on the scent, we're racin' breast high! Heads up, sterns down! View Halloh, by James! Excuse me, Mrs. O'Dowla! I apologise! To come to the point and the death o' the argument, your husband is the future mimber o' Parliament for the borough, signed, sealed an' delivered by Mr. Fireframe himself to-day at Caherconlish! I congratulate you, but don't look at me agin with your game pair of eyes, Mrs. O'Dowla, or I might take a mane advantage o' yer husband's absence!"

Mrs. O'Dowla had been laughing all through Roland's narration and Ignatius looked amused, but Julia took it more seriously.

"I pity your wife, Roland!" she said cynically.

"Why thin, Roland, is it a fact you're tellin' me that John is to be med a mimber?" exclaimed Mrs. O'Dowla, her portly person swelling with emotion.

"Fact! Gospel fact, ma'am; I'm a man o' few words an' thim to the point," said Roland, closing his lips firmly when he ceased speaking, as if it cost him an effort to hold his tongue.

"Glory be to God!" said Mrs. O'Dowla, "wanders will never cease! I can make allowance now for his absence from dinner, but if ye're going up to that hotel, let ye see that he takes no drink before dinner an' only wan glass o' punch after dinner. I don't care how much he takes with the food! I suppose you heard that a servant-boy of ours was seriously injured by the train to-day? 'Twas a sad business!"

"I didn't know who it was then," said Roland. "But 'tis an old saying that misfortunes never come singly. 'Tisn't that John's selection was wan, but——"

"Aren't you premature, or previous as the Yankees say?" said Ignatius. "The vacancy in the constituency has not yet occurred."

"What does that matter?" shouted Roland.

"'Twill make no change in meself," said Mrs. O'Dowla. "I'm what I always was and ever will be to me dyin' day, plain Bridget Penser, me Uncle Dinnis's niece!" And Mrs. O'Dowla crossed her hands over her expansive new Sunday apron.

"I wish we had some of your good uncle's money," said Ignatius.

"I'd scorn to touch it," said Julia haughtily.

"You're not likely to be Miss Penser's legatee, Julia!" said Roland. "I hope the poor servant-boy will recover."

"I understand Donoghue is dead," said Ignatius gravely.

"Roland," said Julia, "you had better go away! Ignatius, 'tis quarter-past five, cut my slice of breast for me, please."

"Aren't y' comin' to the banquet, doctor?" said Roland.

"No," replied Ignatius firmly.

"Where's Hugh? I didn't see him at the meeting any more than yerself, doctor," said Glenpower.

Ignatius looked very grave and said: "Amusing himself according to his taste, I suppose. He is my Aunt Penser's favourite, you know."

"We hardly ever see him at dinner a Sunday," said

Mrs. O'Dowla, sighing. "But I regret to say 'tisn't with Aunt Hannah he spends his time."

Mrs. O'Dowla yawned; and, while her mouth was open to its utmost capacity, she made the sign of the cross frequently with her thumb in the aperture between her lips.

Julia also yawned involuntarily, and her mother said: "Yawning is taking. Why don't you cross your mouth, girl?"

Julia stared contemptuously at her parent, and took her seat at the table.

"If there's an evil spirit in a body he may be exorcised in a yawn by thayology, but he might guine aggin in the next yawn, if you didn't make the sign o' the cross before your mouth," said Mrs. O'Dowla.

"'Tis a wholesome thing to yawn," said Glenpower. "I like to see a sick person or a sick animal yawning; 'tis a sign they're gettin' better."

Ignatius smiled, but said nothing.

Roland left them, and, elbowing his way through the disorderly crowds which filled the street, hurried towards the Gallowglass Arms Hotel.

[1] Easily said.
[2] Corn kail.
[3] Nonsense.
[4] The most favourite method of irritating the police during the Land Agitation, was by whistling an air known as "Harvey Duff."
[5] Mend.
[6] Timber stands, or stools, on which the barrels are laid.
[7] A rope of straw.
[8] Awkward fellows.
[9] Yes, to be sure.
[10] Shrewd.
[11] Neat.
[12] Easy-going.

CHAPTER XXI

"In vain for me are pregnant heifers lowing,
In vain for me are yellow harvests growing,
Ulla, gulla, gulla, g'oane!"—EDWARD WALSH.

WHILE the meeting was proceeding at Caherconlish, Hugh was promenading or resting with Molly Carew by the high fences of Garekiln discussing a thousand plans of escape from his difficulties. If he had not lost the purchase price of the colt, he assured her he would have asked her to elope with him. The limitations of his moral sense were well illustrated by the reservations he made when telling her about his assault, capture, and enrolment as a member of the Society of Valiants. He informed her that he was assaulted and had lost his father's money, but he gave her no further clue to the identity of his assailants than her own wit enabled her to furnish, telling her nothing of the Valiant Society, or its place of meeting, of the horrible ceremony of his own initiation, or of his appointment for that evening at the cross-roads.

The afternoon was far advanced, though it was still broad daylight, as they bent their steps towards the farmyard. The quiet fields were bathed in the lights of an autumn sunset and the sky was gorgeous with prismatic hues. Lakes of pale green or palest blue, embedded in snow-clad mountains whose tops were rosy red or delicate yellow; wide tracks of mystic land never trodden by man, the pavements of which were of gold and the garniture of purple; in fact, all that human mind ever knew or dreamed about the heavens, lay expanded before, above and around the boy and girl, as they walked westward towards the haggard, treading on a velvet-like carpet of white and pink clover, late daisies and yellow trefoil. Neither spoke, for that commanding peace of God, which

passeth all understanding, filled the world around them, and the only sounds appropriate to such a moment were the songs of birds or the bleating of distant lambs. They could not speak, for speech involved thought, and to think was to court unhappiness. For them the message of the Lord was not one of peace but of division: "The father shall be divided against the son and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter and the daughter against the mother." If they were innocent and unoppressed by fear, they might "have heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day," without danger of being upbraided; for no Eden ever made could have been fairer than Garekiln fields were in the glory of the approaching sunset and the peace of the Sabbath day. But, like that other couple of old, these young people had rebelled against the constituted society of their time, "and the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked."

Suddenly they heard a voice like a wail of agony long drawn out. It rose upon the calm air of eventide and seemed to cleave the placid face of heaven. It woke them out of their dreams and they were afraid. Had it been the roar of the bull making straight for them with head lowered and stern high, it would not have terrified them as did this mysterious human cry. They listened in consternation, and it died away. And the boy and girl looked questioningly into each other's eyes; but, before they could frame a syllable, the cry arose again and filled their ears, and this time there were two voices crying forth to heaven, as it seemed, in pain, as if the last day had come.

Hugh O'Dowla trembled. No words ever written could more truly express his emotions than those of the everlasting Book: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." And Molly felt like her mother Eve: "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."

Instinctively they left the centre of the field and betook themselves to the shadow of the fence, and they beheld four men bearing a shutter on which rested a burden

concealed by a quilt. The bearers, followed by four women and some children, were coming slowly up the field in the direction of Mrs. Spilltan's cottage, which was in the centre of the farm. The women were clapping their hands and crying aloud, wailing in Irish and in English, but their cries were for the most part inarticulate.

"They're keening [1] somebody!" exclaimed Molly.

"They can only be going to Spilltan's," whispered Hugh. "Who can it be?"

Unable to restrain their curiosity they emerged from their concealment, and, with hearts palpitating, they went to meet the cortège.

The four men were grimly silent, as they paced slowly with their dread burden, bareheaded, their eyes fixed upon the ground; while the vacant, grief-stricken faces of the women, stunned, hopeless and stupefied, baffled description.

The mother was now leading the keen, finding relief in words: "O-o-o-o, Donoghue a lannav, Donoghue a gra gal! O-o-o-o, Donoghue ashtore, ashtore! Come back, come back, come back to yer poor mother that loved you!" And then she lapsed into Irish, her natural tongue, and the keen rose to a dignity equalling in melodious grandeur the chant of a Hebrew priest singing one of the psalms of David.

Presently the mother rushed to the rude bier and, standing on tip-toe, raised the quilt and tried to gaze into the face of her dead son. Her grief was frantic, and Hugh thought she had lost her reason, "for her bowels yearned upon her son." She beat the shutter with her open palms and struck the corpse, crying: "Wake Donoghue, a lannav, you're in the Haggard Field, in yer own field, where you used to play with me long ago in the days o' th' ould masther. Look, open yer eyes, Donoghue, don't you know where you are, ashtore? There's yer own little house an' the shmoke o' the chimney where the praties are boiling for yer supper. Wake, a gra gal, wake up! We're at home! I have the graineen o' tay ready that you always liked for yer supper, for I know you're tired! O-o-o-o!" And her bitter tears fell

in such a shower that they literally swept away her powers of speech.

Then Mrs. Arnill, a woman of importance on all such melancholy occasions, took up the burden of the keen :

"Ulla, gulla, gulla, goane!
Ochone, ochone, a gra gal machree! Mavrone!
'I'll sing my children's death-song, though
My voice is faint and low.'[2]
Aha, Oho, a weenuch, 'tis you were the warrant to help your poor mother!
Risin' airly, workin' long an' hard, an' bringin' home yer airnin's!
An', oh, whin yer father was taken, though you were oany a little gorsoon,
You did a man's part for yer mother an' yer little brothers and sisters!
You were a man before yer time, Donoghue ashtore!
An' you're a corpse before yer time, Donoghue, gilly machree, ma boochil bawn!"

Even Mrs. O'Fenton took up the keen and recited the virtues of Donoghue and the thousand griefs of his mother, and Mrs. Walsh, the cowman's wife, then took her turn. Meanwhile, though they travelled at a snail's pace, they were drawing near the cottage; and, when the door was reached, the grief of the mother and her children grew so wild and heartrending that Hugh O'Dowla also burst into tears and lost sight of the proceedings.

The men who had borne the corpse from the farmyard to the cottage were Walsh, the cowman, Boosang, the thatcher, and two strangers. When Donoghue had been carried to hospital after the accident at the railway station, there was nobody in the impoverished institution capable of diagnosing his case. The resident doctor was absent; and the hospital messenger was despatched first for the priest, and then, on second thoughts, for one of the dispensary doctors who resided in the Main Street. Donoghue's legs were reduced to a mass of pulp, and it is doubtful if even the most masterly operation would have saved his life.

Father Lawnavawla had celebrated last mass with even more than his usual celerity, having preached no sermon and performed the entire ceremony in twenty-

five minutes, this extraordinary acceleration of the propitiatory sacrifice being for the benefit of those who desired to attend the demonstration at Caherconlish. The curate was calmly disrobing himself in the sacristy, after his superhuman exertions, and feeling a keen appetite for his late breakfast,[3] when a messenger rushed in hatless and breathless and summoned him to the infirmary. Taking the viaticum, and robed in his long soutane and biretta, he went off to the hospital, the crowds making way for him and bowing before him on all sides.

He found Donoghue conscious, but his extensive deathbed experience told him that the young man was dying. The ward was cleared and Donoghue made his last confession to the priest, telling him with the minutest detail all the secrets of the Society of Valiants, so far as he knew them; how and when the Association was started in Gallowglass; who were the members known to Donoghue; who had committed and assisted at the murder of the Agent; why he was murdered; and also the new projects which engaged the attention of the Society.

"'Twas yer reverence's own brother that drove the trap that brought O'Rylan to the shpot an' carr'ed him off aggin in safety!"[4] whispered the expiring boy.

"*Ego absolvo te!*" said the priest. "Face God with courage, your sins are forgiven you!" And he handed the boy the crucifix to kiss, and he administered the Holy Eucharist.

Then the doctor was suffered to come in, but Donoghue's life had faded from the world silently, like an infant's breath passing from the surface of a glass.

Fortified by this new knowledge, Father Lawnavawla, with lips sealed tightly and mind busy upon a train of thought, retraced his steps to his own house through the silent Main Street, which was now deserted by all but the old people, the children, and the topers who lingered round the public-houses. He went into his house and ate the breakfast, poached eggs, rashers, watercress, tea and toast, which his housekeeper, trained to all his tastes, knew so well how to prepare for him. But he pondered as he ate. What would not the British Govern-

ment pay to know what Father Lawnavawla knew! But Father Lawnavawla had not the remotest intention of helping the Government. To do so would involve nothing but loss and discredit to him. And, moreover, Father Lawnavawla hated the British Government and everything that was Protestant, or, as he put it, non-Catholic. Having partaken of breakfast without any haste, he went across to the Parochial House at a leisurely pace and found the pastor at lunch.

It was now two o'clock, and Father O'Darrell, who had breakfasted at nine, was seated before a dish of modest mutton cutlets, done to a most artistic shade of fawn colour and tastefully served up with stewed tomatoes by that excellent cook, known all over the parish as Bessie the Priest. A small bottle of old Chateau Lafitte stood on the white tablecloth beside a green wine-glass. Father O'Darrell was in excellent humour, having nothing to trouble him, and listened with seraphic amiability to his curate's account of the Society of Valiants. Father Lawnavawla made some reservations in his disclosures, for he did not mention his own brother's name as being the driver of the trap. He need not have told the parish priest anything whatever, but he did so because he desired to curry favour with the pastor, and because he feared Father O'Darrell might himself become acquainted with the details through the confessional. Should he chance to do so, the pastor would naturally recollect who had been the recipient of Donoghue's dying confession, and would suspect Father Lawnavawla of having kept important intelligence secret from his superiors. The curate would then be in his pastor's black books and his subsequent promotion would be barred thereby, for Father O'Darrell wielded considerable influence over the bishop of the diocese.

The pastor thanked his curate for the confidence reposed in him: "The bishop will be here to-morrow, as you're aware, for our monthly conference," he said, "an' I won't forget your share in it, you may be sure. 'Twas a looky job we had the promise o' the Bullrush Street site in writing before Culvert was killed."

"Will they go back of it, sir?" said the curate.

"Oh, dear no!" replied the parish priest. "They have to appale or appeal to us too often nowadays to dare to do that. Besides, to give the divvle his jew, the Earl o' Gallowglass was never known to break his word in a matter o' the kind."

"I s'pose you're aware that I'm presiding at that dinner they're giving to Fireframe at the hotel to-night, sir?" said the curate. "'Twas only late last night a few of 'em asked me, an' I ventured to consent without your permission, acting upon some sentiments I heard you——"

"I consint or consent, Dinnis. But be cautious with that Fireframe," said Father O'Darrell. "He's a Protestant if he's anything. I daresay 'twould be nearer to the truth to say he was nothing at all. But, anyhow, let you agree with 'em an' side with 'em, an' report all to meself afterwards. Ah, me! I have a dale of expinses, or a deal of expenses, to meet, preparin' for this conference to-morrow. They'll be over forty of 'em to dinner. I got some black sole an' turbot from Cork, an' I had to get champagne, or shampeen, an' where was the use o' gettin' it if I didn't get the best? I got six dozen o' Pommery an' Grayno, or Greeno, at six pounds a dozen. That ought to be good enough for 'em, sure it ought, oughtn't it?"

"'Tis a lovely wine," said Father Lawnavawla, smacking his lips. "His lordship likes it *brut*, I think, sir, and he's a rare judge."

"A dry wine but not too dry, nothing at all fruity, that's what he likes. Have a nip of something?" said the pastor, pointing to the sideboard, where there was an assortment of liquors of every description which almost realised Bugler's ideal of a drawing-room "furnished just like Wegless's public-house."

Then the priests separated; Father O'Darrell going into his spacious garden to smoke a fine cigar, as an aid to digestion, while admiring his asters and dahlias, which he cultivated in great abundance. Father Lawnavawla went for a drive by the waterside in his smart trap, to whet his appetite for the banquet. Meeting Maurice Sawnuch's

eldest daughter on the road, he invited her to accompany him, and the over-dressed girl proudly consented to do so.

The curate airily raised his whip in reply to many a reverential salute tendered to him by rich and poor alike as he drove off along the beautiful roads, now admiring the autumnal tints of the foliage, now resting his eyes on the placid waters of the estuary of which he caught glimpses now and then between the trees, and anon turning to his fair companion for amusement, feasting his eyes on her buxom outlines.

Hugh O'Dowla was intensely alarmed at the death of Donoghue Spilltan, but he could not elicit a connected account of the occurrence from any of those present, though he questioned them all when the body had been laid to rest temporarily on the large four-posted bedstead to await the experienced ministrations of Mrs. Arnill. Hugh was in a panic. Donoghue Spilltan was a fellow-Valiant, and he had been killed! Might not the same destiny be awaiting Hugh O'Dowla at the cross-roads to-night?

It was evident that the news of Donoghue's death was spreading quickly, for neighbours now began to appear, coming across the fields from all points of the compass towards the cottage. In half-an-hour's time quite a crowd of men and women, boys and girls, were collected in front of Spilltan's cottage, and their conversation was blood-curdling to hear. Hugh and Molly had separated, Hugh standing with the men, Molly taking her place with the women. But all were close together in the little yard before the cottage, and each group could hear the conversation of the other. Ghosts seen in lonely places, the shades of dead men playing hurley at eventide, strange portents which had recently occurred, such as a calf born with two heads, a foal with six legs, were all freely discussed. And, to crown all minor horrors, the re-appearance of Petticoat Loose, the most dreaded of all the evil genii of the barony of Killafastare, was solemnly asserted and vouched for. This Petticoat Loose was the terror of adults and children alike. Various versions of her history were in circulation from time immemorial. She was a woman

who had misconducted herself and had been banished to the Red Sea by some all-powerful priest. But occasionally she broke loose from her marine prison and revisited her native land. The Red Sea had been a *mare incognitum* at the date of Petticoat Loose's original banishment, and it is probable that the cutting of the Suez Canal may have diminished its efficacy as a place of detention. Prior to M. de Lesseps' great engineering accomplishment, Gallowglass people were told that mariners constantly saw Petticoat Loose in the Red Sea, beckoning them on to the rocks and exulting over the distress of weather-beaten ships. But none of the P. and O. boats ever reported her in their logs on the passage from Port Said to Aden ; and, consequently, the Red Sea was no longer regarded as a safe place for hobgoblins banished by almighty priests. Petticoat Loose appeared in all forms, mostly at dusk, and woe betide the mortal wight who dared to notice her, or pass any comment on her behaviour. Sometimes she was like a " brimming " sow restlessly flitting along the roads, as if bent on a long journey unaccompanied by a driver.[5] At other times she took the form of a large greyhound, chasing invisible hares in the bawn fields near the roads, running-up, turning, and killing her game with supernatural prowess. Again she was in the form of a woman, bodice loose and open at the waist, hair dishevelled, petticoat trailing in the dust, walking along the roads in the evening. Woe to the man who accosted her when she appeared in this guise !

The headless coach had been seen too, a great vehicle like the old mail coaches, drawn by six headless horses, driven by a headless coachman, with a headless guard miraculously blowing a ghostly horn.

" Ould Murrish O'Finton was seen goin' wid 'um, last night three weeks, above at Ballyownshuch near the cross-roads," said Walsh, the cowman, taking off his hat and making the sign of the cross in the air.

" Wisha, daureera ? " said Boosang. " Are they comin' around aggin ? Sure, 'tis no wander ; they're awful times. The murder of his honour, the burnin' o' Brile's ricks, an' now the killin' o' poor Donoghue ! Lord save us ! The

cross o' Christ atween us an' all harm! Lord ha' mercy on the dead!"

"Yis, yis!" said Mrs. Walsh, "they were all hurlin' like long ago, I hear, the parish o' Gallowglass aggin the parish o' Mahernacrow. All th' ould people were seen there. Me own father was there, I hear, an' ould Murrish O'Finton that used to own this very part o' Garekiln, for Garekiln wasn't all in wan farm thin, but in five or six farms. An' ould Quisk's father, an' ould Dan Scarlant, Dave na Boolya,[6] an' likewise ould Lar Flauhool and Teague Mahone. Oh, they were all there hurlin' like long ago, oany there wasn't a sound out of 'em.[7] Oh, God save us! No wan is safe those times oany the priest, for he knows all, both the here an' the hereafter!"

The effect of all this weird gossip on Hugh's mind was paralysing. He did not believe it; his reason rebelled against it; but he shuddered nevertheless. The twilight had fallen, the glory of the sky was gone, gloom surrounded the ever-increasing crowd collected in front of the cottage, and now, the laying-out process being completed, the keen recommenced inside the house, led off by Mrs. Arnill and joined in by half-a-dozen women. Hugh put his fingers in his ears and slipped off in the dark, without even saying good-bye to Molly. Should he keep his appointment with the Valiants at the cross-roads? Assuredly no! His mind was made up. Of two terrors he would choose what appeared to be the lesser! His life was in danger, he had sinned, his honesty was implicated in the loss of the money. He feared to meet his father face to face. He was tired of life and yet was not prepared to lose it. He would go straight to the Parochial House and make his confession to Father O'Darrell. And lest his resolution should waver, he ran towards Gallowglass as fast as his legs could carry him.

When nearing Father O'Darrell's house, he met a man on the road who startled him by making the facial sign of the Society of Valiants. It was O'Rylan, but Hugh, of course, did not recognise the Dreg Street man. But he was compelled to stop and shake hands and acknowledge the manual sign and password which were given correctly.

"What way are y' ?" said the stranger. "Will y' not be at the randy-voo to-night ?"

"Time enough yet," replied Hugh hastily, and he walked swiftly away.

O'Rylan shouted after him : "Hay ! A word with you for a moment !"

But Hugh did not stop again until he stood on the door-step of the Parochial House, at which he knocked and rang nervously, his heart seeming to beat more loudly than the ponderous metal knocker.

Father O'Darrell, from his dining-room window, had seen Hugh O'Dowla crossing the circular gravelled space before the house ; and, suspecting that something unusual had happened, arose and opened the hall door. The mere sight of the ample and portly person of the priest, so typical of solidity and security, acted like balm upon the wounded spirit of the young man. The pastor was arrayed in his black soutane, one of the most comfortable forms of overall or dressing-gown, with its Prussian collar and row of countless small red buttons down the front. His high forehead and bald crown gleamed with prosperity, his chin swelled in triple undulations over his Roman collar, his silver snuff-box was in his hand, and he stood like a tower of strength inside his own threshold.

No Asiatic mind ever conceived a face of Buddha more abstracted and self-satisfied, no Egyptian brain ever coined an expression more sphinx-like, but withal without any overt harshness or obtrusive lack of sympathy, than that with which Father O'Darrell, standing inside his own door, was now scrutinising Hugh O'Dowla.

"Good-evening, Eugene," said the priest, who had been dining to repletion. "I hope there is nothing amiss with 'em at home ? Come inside, come inside."

"Good evening, sir," said Hugh, "they're all well at home. It is myself that's in trouble, an' I come to you to go to confession."

As the boy crossed the threshold, Father O'Darrell looked at him with intense concentration. Then he took a small pinch of snuff and occupied himself with his pocket-handkerchief. When the door closed between him and

the noisy roads, Hugh felt a thrill of relief running through his body from his heart down to the soles of his feet. This was a sanctuary into which neither Valiant, nor Government official, nor parent, might dare to intrude.

Bessie the Priest had cleared away the dinner things. But Father O'Darrell had not quite finished; for a *compotier* of grapes, bananas and apples stood on the mahogany table, as well as a silver-corked decanter of port, an open cigar box, and a small tray with a French coffee service.

Father O'Darrell looked once more into the face of the young man and saw that it was troubled. Priest-like he set his brain to work and argued thus upon the premises: "I won't offer him any refreshment. If I did, his troubles might evaporate, and I would derive no benefit from this visit. Hunger is a good sauce for confession as well as for dinner. I'll probe him while his spirits are low." Then he said aloud, in his most sacerdotal manner: "Did you say you wanted to go to confession?"

"I did, sir," replied Hugh whose face was crimson and whose pulse was beating at fever pace.

"Come up to me study!" said Father O'Darrell, lighting a candle which stood on the sideboard and leading the way upstairs.

Father O'Darrell's study was a comfortable room containing many hundreds of volumes arranged on open shelves, mostly devotional and theological; but it also contained a locked glass bookcase in which was to be found literature of a more stimulating description. Confessors hold that, though they may forbid their penitents to read certain books as being dangerous to faith and morals and likely to weaken the reader's belief in sacerdotal omnipotence and infallibility, they are justified in reading such books themselves. How could a confessor know that a book was dangerous if he had not dipped into it himself! Consequently Father O'Darrell's expenditure on books was larger than one would be inclined to suppose. He bought costly books of French pictures, the sight of which would have "raised the hair" on John O'Dowla's head. Having been educated at the Irish College in Paris, he could read French with ease and his stock of French novels was

exhaustive. English publications, like "The Maiden Tribute to Modern Babylon," were then in great vogue, and were bought by the pastor at high prices. It would be ruinous to the soul of a virgin like Miss Julia O'Dowla, for instance, to read such compositions, but that young lady's confessor was inoculated and could defy the virus which lay hidden in the pages of any variety of modern literature. There were even copies of Darwin, Huxley, and Herbert Spencer to be found in Father O'Darrell's study, but their leaves were uncut, for the priest's mind was not equal to the strain involved in pursuing such chains of reasoning.

On one occasion a poor Methodist minister had been invited up to Father O'Darrell's study, and he beheld Darwin, Huxley and Spencer lying on the table as if they were in constant use; and also, marvellous to relate, the poor man saw a volume of Wesley's Sermons along with them. He had come to ask a paltry favour from the priest. It appears he had been preaching in the open air, for he was an itinerating evangelist, and had been stoned in the streets. He had applied to the police for protection, but they told him to fly from the town as if he were an uncleansed leper.

"Scoot!" said Mr. Dudge.

"Vamoose the ranch!" chimed in Mr. Maresburrow. "You'll be lucky if you take your life away with you. If we gave you any protection or encouragement the Castle authorities would remove us to Si-bay-ria! Do you know where Sibayria is?"

"No," replied the Wesleyan with the surprised face of a child.

"Connaught!" roared Mr. Dudge. "We call all the constabulary inspectors and resident magistrates in Connaught Sibayrians. They're all in Sibayria, an' we have no desire to follow them. See?"

Then the minister had gone to the final court of appeal, the Parochial House—and had found the Darwin and Huxley and the Wesley Sermons, and had been terrified out of his wits by the onslaught of the learned divine, the owner of the tomes.

"I warn you to lave, or to leave, this place, me good man. We will tolerate no proselytisers or soupers here," said Father O'Darrell. "Go home, if you have a home, an' mind yer own business."

And the dazed young preacher went away to spread the news amongst his people that the priests of Rome were the most learned and the greatest of men, deeply read in all the advanced sciences and speculations, profound scholars all of them from the incomparable Leo XIII. down to Father O'Darrell of Gallowglass. For is it not written: "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

Into this study now walked Father O'Darrell, followed by Hugh O'Dowla. Besides the books and ordinary furniture, the apartment contained an altar on which stood a statue of the Blessed Virgin, holding a chubby, naked, jumping babe in her arms, the face being after the style of Raphael's Madonnas, and the figure lightly draped so as to show the contour of the body. Father O'Darrell was a connoisseur in statuary, and a plaster cast which would be eminently suitable for the congregation, or "them," as the priests called the people, would not be honoured with standing-room in the pastor's study. There were two candles on this altar. Father O'Darrell lit them, and blew out the light which he had brought from the dining-room.

The study also contained an open confessional, that is to say a wooden screen firmly fixed at right angles to the wall, with a chair for the priest at one side of it and a kneeling stool for the penitent at the other. The screen was about four feet high, so that the head of the penitent, when kneeling, rose clear over it.[8]

Father O'Darrell kissed his stole and threw it over his neck. Then he knelt on a *prie-dieu* before the altar, covered his face with his broad fat hands and remained perfectly still, as if entranced in prayer. Hugh fell on his knees on the carpet, closed his eyes and endeavoured to collect his thoughts for the confession which he was about to make. Miss Julia O'Dowla had frequently made

her dainty little confession here, but Hugh had never before been within the sacred precincts, and he felt awe-struck by his mysterious surroundings. There was no light in the room save that of the flickering candles on the altar, and the shadows were moving spasmodically on the walls. At length the priest arose and walked across to the confessional where he sat on the chair, his back close against the wall, his hands resting on his knees. Hugh followed him and knelt on the penitent's stool with his face towards the wall.

" In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost ! " said the young man, making the sign of the cross by touching his forehead, heart, and both shoulders with the tips of the fingers of his right hand. The priest also crossed himself.

" Bless me, Father, for I have sinned ! " said Hugh O'Dowla, and he went on to repeat the first half of the *Confiteor :* " I confess to Almighty God, to Blessed Mary ever Virgin, to Blessed Michael the Archangel, to Blessed John the Baptist, to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul and to all the Saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought word and deed," and then, striking his breast three times, " Through my fault, Through my fault, Through my most grievous fault."

These stereotyped formalities over, the Confessor said : " When were you at confession last ? "

" Three months ago, sir," replied the penitent.

" Now tell me what you have done wrong since then ! " said Father O'Darrell, and Hugh went through his breaches of the ten commandments.

He entered into the details of his false oath and initiation into the Society of Valiants, as a breach of the second commandment, the terms of which, as he knew them, were : " Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God in vain." The second commandment, as recorded in Exodus : " Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image," &c., is omitted from the decalogue by the priests and is not taught to Catholics, not one in ten thousand of whom is aware of its existence. The tenth commandment is split into two : " Thou shalt not covet thy neigh-

bour's wife" being called the ninth, and "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods" being known as the tenth commandment, in order to make the deficiency good and keep the number of commandments at ten.

When every item of the proceedings in the cavern had been related, together with the names of those whom Hugh had recognised, the circumstances of the murder were gone into, and all that Hugh had seen and overheard was communicated to the priest. It was well for Father Lawnavawla that he had come to market early with his information, and Father O'Darrell now remembered it for him.

Hugh recited his breaches of the remaining commandments *seriatim;* and under the head of the sixth commandment, the terms of which, as he had learned them, were: "Thou shalt not commit adultery," he gave the parish priest a full and minute account of his relations with Molly Carew from the very beginning of their acquaintanceship down to the moment of their last parting. It must not be supposed that the penitent unfolded his lengthened tale without assistance. Searching questions were put, asking for the minutest details as to acts, postures, thoughts and words. Indeed, if the right-minded Christian reader could be furnished with a *verbatim* report of the confession it might be a moot point as to whether the recital of the acts did not constitute as great, if not a greater offence against propriety than the thoughtless commission of them. Then, under the head of the seventh commandment, as Hugh knew it: "Thou shalt not steal," Father O'Darrell heard of the sale of the colt and the loss of the money.

When all had been told, including numberless miscellaneous sins to which no allusion need be made, Father O'Darrell pondered for a while and said: "Have you omitted anything, me child?"

"No, sir," replied the weeping youth, for tears were streaming down Hugh O'Dowla's face in such profusion that they rejuvenated him, obliterating all the characteristics of adolescence and melting him back into babyhood.

Father O'Darrell considered the situation: "If I give him absolution, his heart will leap up for joy. Youth is forgetful; gratitude is short-lived; my power over him will be at an end; I shall be a spent force. Therefore I shall put him off." [9] Then the priest said to his young penitent: "This is wan o' the most serious cases I ever heard of. You'll have to come to me again."

"Oh!" groaned Hugh O'Dowla, sobbing. "Put off! Put off! And my life in danger! What'll I do? What'll I do? I dare not go home! I dare not go out of this house to-night! I am watched! I broke my appointment and my life is forfeited! Oh, forgive me, forgive me, Father!"

"When did you see your Aunt Pinser, or Penser?" said the priest, as if a new view of the case presented itself to his mind.

"Oh, not for a long time, sir!" said Hugh.

"An' you can't go home, an' your life is forfeited, an' you can't lave this house? I can't accommodate you here, for you'd have to gout in the morning, as I have the Bishop coming to-morrow, an' that would be as bad for you as going out to-night."

"Don't turn me out!" said Hugh eagerly. "If you do you will never see me again! Weren't you often anxious for me? Can't you keep me now when I have come to you of my own free will, without your asking me?"

"Hum!" said the pastor. "Do I understand that you are willing to consecrate yourself to the Church and become a priest? Mind, I'm not asking you to do it! You're not in a state o' grace."

"I am willing to be a priest. I am willing! I am truly sorry for all the wrong I have done, for all the awful sins I have committed, an' I only want absolution to be in the state o' grace!" And, raising his voice to a shriek, Hugh cried out: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me!"

The passionate cry of the boy startled even the case-hardened priest. "Hush!" he exclaimed, "God has not forsaken you. I will do me part in this business."

HUGH O'DOWLA AT CONFESSION

"I am willing to be a priest! I am truly sorry for all the wrong I have done, for all the awful sins I have committed, and I only want absolution to be in the state o' grace! Oh, my God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"—p. 312.

The tread of Bessie the Priest was heard on the stairs. Then followed a gentle tap at the door. "Stay where you are," whispered Father O'Darrell, and he left the room, shutting the door after him. Bessie held an envelope in her hand: "There was a ring at the bell just now, yer reverence, an' whin I answered the door I found this thrown into the letter-box."

Irish priests are not unaccustomed to receive mysteriously delivered letters, so Father O'Darrell expressed no surprise as he took the packet from his servant. She went downstairs and, after a moment's pause, he followed and went into the dining-room, where he shut himself in. His sensitive and experienced fingers told him that there were bank-notes in the envelope. He opened it carefully and found thirty-two single notes, unaccompanied by any writing or explanation whatever. It was the money which Hugh O'Dowla had lost, and which had been found in the cavern by the Valiants. O'Rylan had been in favour of keeping it as a welcome addition to the Society's war-chest, but Quisk and Scarlant and the others had overruled the Dreg Street man.

Even O'Grogan had protested: "We may kill, but we doesn't rob! I'd cut a landlord's throat, but I wouldn't take a thripp'ny bit from his pocket." And Dick Quisk had put the money into an envelope with the intention of conveying it to Hugh at the first opportunity. Chancing to meet O'Rylan, he learned that Hugh had just gone into Father O'Darrell's and it occurred to him that he had gone to report the loss of the money to the parish priest. He, therefore, anxious not to be mixed up any further in the matter, threw the envelope unaddressed into the priest's letter-box, rang the bell and ran away.

It would not have fared well with Hugh O'Dowla if he had come out from Father O'Darrell's house that night. Had he done so, it is probable that his worst fears would have been realised.

Father O'Darrell counted the notes and thrust them into his trousers' pocket. He knew, as well as if Quisk had personally communicated the intelligence to him, that they were the notes Hugh O'Dowla had lost. But

his priestly conscience was not burdened by the knowledge. What proof had he that the money belonged to anyone in particular ? He would not be justified in taking action on a mere surmise. Thirty-two pounds had fallen from the sky ; he had that considerable sum of money in his pocket, and there it should remain for the present. He returned to the study and found the boy pale and woe-begone as he had left him, his mind troubled by a thousand fantasies, his brain picturing all sorts of impending danger.

The priest's eyes were contemplatively bent upon the carpet as he resumed his seat at the confessional : " You tell me you desire to become a priest and wish to be in the state o' grace. Bow your head and say an Act of Contrition ! " [10]

Oh, with what joy did Hugh O'Dowla hear the magical Latin words as he said in a loud whisper : " Oh, my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee and I detest all my sins most sincerely because they are displeasing to Thee, my God, who art so good and merciful, and I am firmly resolved never more to offend Thee. Amen."

The boy felt really forgiven and as if he had received a new lease of life. Father O'Darrell looked into his face, and seeing that it was pale and that the blue veins stood out through the transparent skin, he asked Hugh if he was hungry. And then Hugh, remembering that he had fasted all day and had eaten but little at his breakfast, replied that he was ; and they went down to the dining-room, the priest leading the way with the lighted candle in his hand. To Hugh O'Dowla it seemed as if a century had elapsed since they had ascended those stairs, so much had happened in the interval, for in that short space of time the young man seemed to have lived all his life over again.

[1] The "keen" is the death song, or formal lament, for the dead, setting forth the grief of the relatives and the merits of the deceased.

[2] These two lines are a translation from the Irish by J. J. Callanan.

[3] A priest does not break his fast until the last mass which he has to celebrate is over. If he celebrates two masses in the same day he does not even take the ablutions, or wine and water, at the first mass.

[4] The car on which the murderers of Lord Leitrim drove to the scene of action in 1881 was driven by the brother of one of the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church.

[5] Boars are not generally kept by Irish farmers, and female pigs have to be sent long distances in the mating or 'brimming' season. They are allowed to perform the journey by themselves, for, in this as in many other respects, the pig excels all other animals in intelligence.

[6] Dave the Striker.

[7] The shades of the departed are constantly said to have appeared playing hurley in the twilight. It is one of the commonest beliefs.

[8] This class of open confessional is to be found in the reception rooms of most monasteries and in some Catholic churches in London.

[9] "Put off" is the term used amongst Irish Catholics when a penitent is sent away unabsolved and told to come again.

[10] The penitent recites the formal Act of Contrition while the Absolution is being given.

CHAPTER XXII

" A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little further on,
For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade."—MILTON.

FATHER O'DARRELL gave Hugh a good dinner, for when an Irish priest is well-disposed, he can be the most hospitable of men.

" Eat slowly," said the pastor. " Nine-tinths, or tenths of our trouble come from want o' mastication. Take a glass o' sherry and after a time take a glass o' port."

Hugh made a hearty meal and did as he was bidden; and, when he had finished, the pastor ordered him a small cup of black coffee with some liqueur brandy. Never in his life had the young man had such a luxurious meal. His conscience at rest, his body sated with creature comforts, Hugh felt as if he had gained admission into elysium, and the solid advantages offered by the Church began to assume a tangible form in his mind.

Father O'Darrell meantime smoked a cigar and watched his young guest refreshing himself; but his sacerdotal brain was busy.

" How far do you count it to yer Aunt Pinser's, or Penser's place at Ballygrauver ? " he asked.

" Seven miles, sir," answered Hugh.

" An' you tell me you weren't there this good while ? Well, you'll go there to-night, for I won't have time to take you there to-morrow, I'll be too busy with the conference. An' I'll do for you what I wouldn't do for any other young man in the parish, I'll go 'long with you meself and insure, or ensure, you a hearty welcome ! "

" Thank you, sir," said Hugh simply.

Father O'Darrell ordered his horse and car to be got ready, and in ten minutes' time the tread of the horse and

the grating of the wheels on the gravel were heard outside the window. Father O'Darrell wrapped himself up in an immense frieze overcoat and woollen scarf, and the two settled themselves, one on each side of the comfortable four-wheeled covered car, sharing the heavy bearskin rug between them. Fortunately they had not to pass through the crowded Main Street, and the good horse stepped over the level stretches of white road at eight miles an hour, slackening his pace to a walk at every hill.

"You'll be well rid o' that girl!" said the priest. "She has a bad drop in her from her father's side."

Hugh could not make a reply, but hung his head for shame, as the priest went on to say:

"If you married her your life would be a hell upon earth. If you didn't marry her, you'd have to lave home an' gout on the world without a farthing from yer father. I know John O'Dowla as well as I know meself. He'd run you as sure as I'm sitting here. But even if you married a girl o' yer own class in after years, what would yer fate be? You'd be like the rest of 'em, a white slave, a crayture, or creature without a will or a pleasure of yer own in anything. Don't I know it? Don't I hear the confessions of most o' the married men o' the parish? An' I find that 'tis no loss but a gain to be unmarried. We all know that the result o' the first marriage was destruction to the contracting parties an' all their posterity. 'Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, cursed is the earth in thy work; with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life,' said God to Adam. And the Lord might well have added to Adam, as he did to the serpent: 'She shall crush thy head and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel.' There it is for you in a nutshell. That's what you escape by avoiding marriage. People think that the priest's life is of a different nature altogether from the layman's, that they're two different animals as it were. Nothing could be farther from the fact. The priest's position is more assured an' he has a better time than the married men, that's the difference. Only that yer mind is made up I wouldn't speak so freely to you."

Hugh did not reply, but the words sank deep into his receptive mind, for he had never heard them before. The car rolled on in the dark, and in less than an hour they were driving up the neglected avenue to the cottage where old Miss Penser was "husbanding life's taper" and keeping the small flame of life alight with difficulty.

Irishmen, as a rule, are hot-tempered, quick to resent a slight, real or imaginary, and, therefore, do not shine in the delicate art of legacy-hunting. Thus the O'Dowlas made no effort to secure for themselves, either in whole or part, the large fortune which lay at the absolute disposal of old Miss Penser, and which seems an incredibly large sum of money for a woman of the middle-class in a district like Gallowglass to be possessed of. Monsignor Penser died towards the end of the 'sixties, being then eighty years of age. He had been a parish priest, first in Ballygrauver and then in Gallowglass, for forty years, and wielded extraordinary power over the people. He acted as banker to hundreds of rich farmers and dealers who did not know how to write their own names, for at that time the trade of banking was not developed in the South of Ireland, and there was no place of security in which to put out money at interest.[1] Monsignor Penser neither gave, nor was he asked for, any interest on the vast sums entrusted to him, and his accounts were kept in a rough and ready fashion. He was always prepared to pay out money to its owners on demand and, at his death, it was freely admitted that he had defrauded none of his clients. But he lent the money out at high interest and he received a considerable amount of legacies, so that, at his death, he left his little sister, whom he loved dearly, and who was his junior by twenty years, an immense fortune in cash, bonds and mortgages, with certain verbal instructions as to his wishes, but placing no legal restraint upon her absolute power over the money.

The old lady disliked John O'Dowla and had long since broken off direct communication with that good man, believing that her niece had made a *mésalliance* in marrying him. She was fond of Hugh because, as she said, "he took after the Pensers," and the old lady's disrespectful refer-

ences to John O'Dowla had done not a little to embitter the relations between father and son. She ignored Ignatius's existence, and whenever Mrs. O'Dowla visited Ballygrauver, which was not often, she was compelled perforce to come alone, or in company with Hugh who always went against his will. Miss Julia O'Dowla absolutely refused to visit her great aunt, whom she alluded to as "an abominable old maid," and had thereby won her father's heart.

Notwithstanding the ill-luck which so frequently afflicts the lot of man at the most critical moments, it cannot be denied that fortunate accidents do occasionally happen.

"God be praised!" exclaimed the old woman who opened the door in response to Father O'Darrell's peremptory knock. "Your reverence came in the nick o' time! I think she's dyin'!"

"Huh! Huh!" said the pastor, "is that the way? Show me up to her at wanst, or at once!"

Hugh found his way into the little sitting-room and Father O'Darrell followed the aged attendant upstairs to Miss Penser's bedroom.

Old Miss Penser had known Father O'Darrell when he was a very humble youth coming to ask for favours from the great Monsignor Penser, and she always addressed him, and many other priests, by their Christian names: "Oh, James," she exclaimed, "what good angel sent you to me? I'm dying, I'm dying! I saw my brother Denis by the bedside this minute!" Her voice was faint as if it came from beyond the grave, like the sound of a worn record heard in a phonograph.

"I had a vision," said the pastor, casting up his eyes to the ceiling, "and I came to you! I saw your brother the Monsignor celebrating the Mass for the Dead at a strange altar!"

"*Laus Deo!*" said the shrivelled little woman, whose education had been far superior to that received now by women of her station in life, "*Laus Deo optimo, maximo, sempiterno!*"

Father O'Darrell's manner was humble and subdued. Though she was dying, he could not forget her as she was in the old days, and none of the brusqueness which he

would display at the bedside of a Mrs. Wegless would be suitable in this case.

"Do you wish for confession and communion and extreme unction?" he asked in a respectful whisper.

She nodded her assent, and her bright eyes seemed as if they would leap from her withered little head. In less than ten minutes he had heard her confession, administered the Eucharist, and anointed the little lady. Then he sat down meekly by the bedside and told her of his vision. It was our Blessed Lady who had appeared to him, he said. And when he had poured forth his bushel of romance, he whispered the two grains of fact which lay at the bottom of his mouth into the ears of the dying woman. Hugh O'Dowla was in the house! Hugh O'Dowla was resolved to become a priest!

Miss Penser was speaking. Father O'Darrell bent his head to catch her words. She desired to see her favourite nephew. And the priest at once ushered Hugh into the room, reiterating his statement that the young man had decided to study for the priesthood. Hugh himself, bending over the bed, gave his hand to the old lady and stood by the bedside.

"I must alter my will," said the tiny voice from the pillow.

"Where is it?" said Father O'Darrell, aroused to action like a troop-horse at sound of bugle.

Hugh made way, and a long consultation took place between the priest and Miss Penser. The will was produced from a safe near the foot of the bed; and, at a nod and wink from Father O'Darrell, Hugh slipped noiselessly out of the room.

Holding the will close to the light, Father O'Darrell devoured its contents with marvellous accuracy and speed. He was well accustomed to such business, which was, so to speak, part of the sacerdotal day's work.

"'Twas well I came," he said under his breath; but he only said to Miss Penser, "and you wish this to be altered, Miss Penser?" And he produced a pen, ink and blotter from his breast pocket. He never went to visit the sick unprovided with those necessaries.

"Read the legacies," said the little voice.

And Father O'Darrell read aloud a list of legacies, for a parallel to which I shall refer my readers to the authentic wills published in *Priests and People in Ireland.*

A sum of over eight thousand pounds was divided amongst various orders of priests and nuns, including a donation of £500 to the Archbishop of Westminster "for the conversion of England to the Faith."

And a further sum of sixteen thousand pounds was devised for the erection of a Home under clerical management for aged Catholic females in distress.

And the will concluded thus: "I bequeath all my residuary estate of whatsoever kind or description to the Reverend James Xavier O'Darrell, parish priest of Gallowglass, to dispose of, as he may think fit, in the interests of the poor of Gallowglass, or in the erection of a new church for the parish."

Father O'Darrell ceased reading and drew a half-suppressed sigh. The announcement of each legacy had pierced his avaricious soul to the quick. It roused his indignation to see so much money bestowed out of the parish upon strange mendicant nuns and priests who had never done any good for Gallowglass. But the pastor, knowing that he possessed some share of Miss Penser's favour, made no comment upon her disposition of her property, lest he should forfeit her good will at this supreme moment.

"You wish to alter this?" he said expectantly. "May be you can do it by a codicil? I suppose 'tis the clauses about the Home you want to repale or repeal."

"Yes," said the squeaky voice, "and more besides!" She laid her little hand on his coat-sleeve and the finger bones could be seen through the transparent skin as plainly as if the Röntgen rays were beating upon them. "I want all the legacies in the first part of the will revoked, except the two hundred pounds for masses to the P.Ps. of Ballygrauver and Mahernacrow. They amount to——"

"Eight thousand one hundred pounds!" exclaimed Father O'Darrell. "That can be done by a codicil."

" I want that money invested in the Government Funds, and I want the necessary part of the interest of it to be used in paying for the education of Hugh for the priesthood, and the surplus interest to accumulate and be lodged on deposit receipt in the National Bank at Gallowglass and re-invested in the Funds, and—and I want the whole principal sum to be invested by the trustees permanently in the Funds, and that, on Hugh's ordination, the whole interest be paid yearly to him direct—— "

The little woman was growing unconscious and she pointed to the safe. Father O'Darrell went across and brought her a bundle of papers which was all that it contained, and she selected one and handed it to him. It was a document neatly written in a legal hand, setting forth all the directions in regard to Hugh, down to the minutest particular, which she had been endeavouring to explain. Hugh was to have the enjoyment of the interest from the date of his ordination. On his obtaining the rank of P.P., he was to have control of half the principal, and upon attaining to the rank of Monsignor, he was to have control of the remaining half. The old lady's idea was that a yearly income of two hundred and fifty pounds, over and above his stipend as a priest, would enable Hugh to wield a potent influence over his fellow-priests. The prospective accession to a fortune of four thousand pounds on attaining the rank of parish priest would be sufficient to induce any bishop to promote him ; for Hugh would be in a position to offer a sum of one, two, three or four thousand pounds to the bishop in proportion to the value of the parish to which he might be appointed. The further prospect of a sum of four thousand pounds on his elevation to the rank of Monsignor would, it was calculated, enable him to purchase that dignity at venal Rome,[2] for the old Monsignor had schooled his little sister in the practices of the rulers of the Papal States, having been educated at Rome and a frequent visitor, in after life, to the " shrines of the Apostles."

Miss Penser further devised the sixteen thousand pounds which she had set aside for the Home, to be invested in Consols in the name of trustees, and she directed the

interest on this to accumulate and be re-invested until her nephew should attain the rank of bishop, when he should be at liberty to withdraw the entire principal and dispose of it as he might think fit. This vast sum would, in Miss Penser's opinion, enable her nephew to become a bishop before he had reached the age of fifty. Old Monsignor Penser often told her that five thousand pounds would secure the best diocese in Ireland for the greatest fool that ever received priest's orders.

The reader is doubtless aware that the power of appointing Irish bishops is vested in the Propaganda at Rome. When a vacancy occurs, the parish priests of the diocese meet and select three eligible candidates by ballot, and the names of the chosen three are then forwarded to Rome in the order corresponding to the number of votes received by each. Sometimes the Italian ecclesiastics confer the bishopric on the *Dignissimus*, or candidate who has received the highest number of votes; but it frequently happens that the first name is ignored and the appointment given to the *Dignior*, or second name, and even to the *Dignus*, or third name on the list. It also frequently happens that all three names are passed over and a complete outsider appointed. This had been so in the case of more than one of the archbishops and in the case of several of the bishops appointed within the preceding thirty years.

In the event of Hugh not being ordained, by reason of a change of mind, or loss of vocation, the money, save in so far as it had been expended on his education, was to revert to the uses for which it was originally intended, each legacy to be diminished *pro rata*.

And Miss Penser appointed the manager of the National Bank at Gallowglass for the time being, the Earl of Gallowglass, and Father O'Darrell, or, in the event of his death, the parish priest of Gallowglass, as the trustees for the execution of the will. This will stipulated that Hugh change his name from O'Dowla to Penser, and bequeathed the residuary estate to Father O'Darrell as before.

It would have been difficult to devise a more efficient instrument for carrying out the purpose of the testatrix.

She guarded against the rapacity of the priests by the appointment of the bank manager and lord of the soil as co-trustees with the parish priest. The possibility of the money being wasted by the young man was provided against by the tying up of the capital. And the terms of the will gave the chief ecclesiastical authorities an interest in Hugh's advancement by making the release of the principal money conditional on the young man's promotion to the several dignities specified.

"This is a will in itself," said Father O'Darrell. "It is signed and witnessed, and I see it was drawn up by Dan M'Quibble, the Gallowglass attorney, and all the legacies are specified in a codicil to have effect, if Hugh does not take Orders. May I ask if anyone is after seeing this but ourselves? 'Tis of an earlier date than the will I read first, and is supersayded, or superseded, by it."

"No one but the attorney has seen it. He made it entirely under my own directions," and the little voice faded away almost to vanishing point. But Miss Penser revived again and said faintly: "Where is Hugh? I wish the later will containing all the legacies to be burned, and I want the earlier will to stand."

Hugh was called, and in his presence the later will was burned by Father O'Darrell who laid it on a tray before Miss Penser's eyes and ignited it. When it was reduced to ashes, the little lady turned on her side, closed her eyes and exhaled her last breath as painlessly and peacefully as she had ever drawn breath when in the prime of health. Father O'Darrell knelt by the bedside and covered his face with his hands, and Hugh followed his example. After a time the priest arose, and Hugh, who was crying, did likewise; and both looked down upon the little face on the pillow from which life had departed.

"Peace be with her! God have mercy on her soul! She's in heaven if ever mortal went there under the Christian dispensation," said Father O'Darrell. "God send that our own deaths may be as hers was! Amen."

They left the bedroom and went downstairs. Father O'Darrell said: "You owe me a greater debt of gratitude to-night than you owe to the father that begot you or

the mother that bore you. If I had turned you away from my door, an' there are many who would have done it, you would have been killed by the Valiants and you would have died in your sins. Don't think I want to make any claim on you! No! Quite the contrary, I adopt you from this moment as my son, my son in Christ Jesus and in Mary His Mother!" And Father O'Darrell threw his arms around Hugh and kissed him on the forehead. "I needn't go into particulars," went on the priest, "I have your aunt's will in me hand. She has made a princely provision for you, and, unless you do something utterly ruffianly, you will be the greatest man in the Irish Church before your death. She was leaving you penniless and, had she died before our arrival, you would be a beggar and an outcast now. I needn't go into details. She had set her heart on your going into the Church and, when I told her the good news, she changed her will. But all is contingent on your becoming a priest. She has left me a small residue to help me with my new church, but in ayther, or either case I would have got the same; so it is no gain to me!"

The late Monsignor Penser died worth thirty thousand pounds [3] and, allowing amply for charities during her life, the little lady had lived within the income derived from the interest of that sum. Therefore Father O'Darrell calculated that his windfall should amount to six thousand pounds or more. He felt elated beyond measure and actually began to believe in the vision which he had employed to such good purpose with Miss Penser.

"'Twas a vision I had," said the pastor. "All these things were pre-ordained. 'Twas a vision I saw that made me bring you here!"

And Hugh, infected by his enthusiasm and unstrung by the strange occurrences of the day, literally believed him. Father O'Darrell's star was in the ascendant. Never had he received so much money in one sum. And the priest felt his joy almost beyond control. Standing in the middle of the room he raised up his hands and said: "'My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour!' You will be my son,

Eugene! 'Because He that is mighty hath done great things to me; and holy is His name! He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich He hath sent empty away!' You will be my son, and I will be indeed your father. Monsignor Penser must have foreseen all these things. I am not too old to live to see your greatness, and you may also see me, even me, greater in the Lord than I am. The father will help the son, and the son will help the father. Have I not saved your life?"

Hugh was crying hysterically and the priest embraced him again, such is the potency of wealth to win the love of the avaricious.

"You will stay here to-night," continued Father O'Darrell. "Don't go outside the door. You are watched, and the stab of a knife or a shot from a revolver would destroy you in the twinkling of an eye. I'll settle with your father about the colt and about everything else, and I'll arrange about the funeral. And when I'm done with to-morrow's conference I'll drive over for you and we'll go straight to the Diocesan College at Kilmoy, where you will be installed as the special *protégé* of meself an' the bishop. Oh, what a career you have before you! Would to God I were beginning life again in your position! But I will live my life over again in the career opening before my beloved son!" And Father O'Darrell departed.

The faithful attendant sat up all night by the bedside of her mistress by whom she had not been forgotten, for she had received from the little lady the sum of five hundred pounds as a gift *inter vivos*, the money being lodged in the National Bank on a joint deposit receipt, issued to mistress and servant, and it reverted absolutely now to the survivor to whom Miss Penser had transferred the voucher a month previously.

Hugh also sat in the room with his aunt's body all through the night, despite the protestations of the attendant who busied herself arranging and igniting wax-candles till the room blazed with light. Thus Hugh O'Dowla evinced all the respect in his power for the remains of his relative whom he had so studiously avoided during her life; and, in doing so, he followed the general practice of his country-

men who vainly seek to atone for the most callous neglect of living kinsfolk by a lavish expenditure on wakes, funerals and masses for the dead.

But while these momentous events were taking place at Ballygrauver, other human comedies and tragedies, no less important to the characters in this history, though far less profitable to the parties concerned in them, were being enacted at Gallowglass, whither we shall now return and join the assembled company at the Gallowglass Arms Hotel.

[1] A well-remembered Bishop of Cork established several of his brothers in trade with money thus entrusted to him, and their descendants are amongst the richest Catholics in the South of Ireland to-day.

[2] The power of appointment to this dignity rests with the Pope.

[3] This happens to be the sum of money left by a priest in the county of Donegal who died about the date of the events recorded in this chapter.

CHAPTER XXIII

"For neither, if we eat, are we the better."—1 Cor. viii. 8.

"Blood alive, 'tis a great day for the country!" said Roland, bursting into the largest sitting-room in the hotel where dinner had just commenced. At the head of the table, in the chair, sat Father Lawnavawla, C.C., having Mr. Fireframe on his right hand and Mr. O'Martyr, M.P., on his left. Between Mr. Fireframe and Mr. M'Quibble, the solicitor, sat John O'Dowla, looking very bashful.

"We have had a great day for Ireland, Mr. O'Dowla," said Mr. Fireframe looking unutterably wise and austere, as he sat erect, a head and shoulders above the stooping sheepish company that sprawled over the tables.

So confused was John O'Dowla owing to his prolonged fast and over-excitement, that he misunderstood the purport of Mr. Fireframe's remark.

"I was never a good warran' t' ate, sir!" he said; but Mr. Fireframe did not seem to hear the irrelevant observation.

"Eat plenty meat, John," said Father Lawnavawla, casting a side smile at Mr. Fireframe which was completely ignored, "an' you'll be able to stand any amount o' whisky afterwards! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Thank your reverence kindly, he, he, he," said John O'Dowla, leaning forward across Mr. Fireframe. "I'll follow the clergy an' I'll be sure to be right!"

Mr. Fireframe's demeanour was frigid. He held his head aloft, ate sparingly, and drank only a little water, which he poured into a claret glass from a hock bottle in which it had been specially placed for his own use.

"The Irish pay far too little attention to their food," said Mr. Fireframe at length. "They are thriftless and

exceedingly unskilful in cookery and household management."

Father Lawnavawla laughed, and John O'Dowla followed his example.

As the banquet proceeded, John occasionally lifted his face from his plate and looked up furtively at Mr. Fireframe.

Roland, too, from his end of the table, was peeping at the Leader. "Isn't he like a huntsman watching his hounds feeding around him?" he said to his neighbour and old friend, Father O'Loobera. "I often lunched with the big fellas an' their wives, but I never saw such a grandee as Mr. Fireframe, so cool, so devilish cool. Blee me, yer reverence, there isn't a big pot in the world, in the House o' Commons or anywhere else, that can ruffle a feather in Fireframe! Ireland has a great man in him. There's nothing I blieve in so much as breeding in man, woman, horse or hound!"

As the viands disappeared, the diners became more mellow under the influence of Mr. Benmore's whisky. Even the most ardent Mahernacrow patriots, who were fiercest in verbal denunciations of the distiller's brother, were the principal subscribers to the vast sum expended upon the erection of Riviera House, a residence built and upholstered on a scale of magnificence second only to the palaces of the great Dublin deities of porter.

Conversation was growing loud and general.

"Can we not all aid in the creation of a national literature?" Mr. O'Martyr was saying.

"Ah, Mr. O'Martyr," said Father Lawnavawla, "I only coincide too heartily with that sentiment, but I'm very, very much afraid, the present is a day of pure prose, merciless logic and hard sense, as you once eloquently said yourself."

"There is a Spanish melancholy about our country," replied Mr. O'Martyr, "a certain opiate charm easily dissolved into happy dimples and rude sonnets of liquid gratitude. The faces of our peasantry are as swarthy as Spaniards and their eyes are dark and melancholy enough for Egyptians! In all things, moral, intellectual and

physical, our countrymen are 'kindly Irish of the Irish, neither Saxon nor Italian.'"

"And yet they are ruled by Saxons and Italians," murmured Mr. Fireframe.

"An' I spose the poet meant to convey as much, sir," said Father Lawnavawla meekly.

John O'Dowla, who had been listening open-mouthed, lifted his eyes to Mr. Fireframe's face and said: "That's rare eloquence, sir!"

Mr. Fireframe smiled almost imperceptibly, as he said, "Rare? Overdone, I should have thought!" adding in a loud voice, with gravity: "If Mr. O'Martyr hadn't so many speeches to make, he should be the man to create a national literature for Ireland!"

"But alas!" continued Mr. O'Martyr, with emphatic loudness, elated by the approval of his great Chief, "secretiveness, caution and dissimulation have grown encrusted over the hides of our peasantry, like the cuirass on the backs of palæozoic animals accustomed to be preyed upon! And which of us is not a peasant rogue and slave?"

This sentiment was spoken in such a loud voice that everyone at table heard it.

"They's a dale o' rogues goin' sure enough. D'ye see that now?" said Mr. Wegless.

"The new Land Act will change all that," said Mr. M'Quibble.

"I'd turn around and die for me country!" exclaimed Sporeen tearfully. "'Tis thrue for him, though, their clothes is incrusted on their hides. I didn't see a craysed trowsers in the crowd to-day, only me own!"

"Who fears to speak o' 'Ninety-eight?" roared Maurice Sawnuch.

"God save Ireland, says the hayro! What?" cried O'Pollards.

"If saying God save Ireland constitutes a hero," said Mr. Fireframe to John O'Dowla, speaking with emphasis, "we are a nation of heroes!"

"See! True for you, sir, 'tis in every cadday's mouth that's able to cock his lip!" said O'Dowla, delighted at having grasped Mr. Fireframe's meaning.

"Gallowglass," said Mr. Fireframe, in responding to the toast of his health which had been substituted for that of the sovereign of the realm, "has at last taken her rightful place amongst the patriotic municipalities of Ireland (cheers). You have now a branch of the great national organisation which will protect you, protect you against this hostile foreign Government; and through which you will have an opportunity of practically proving, practically proving, your patriotism, by subscribing, as all good Irishmen should do, to the national exchequer. I feel sure my friend, Mr. James McCoratry, will have good accounts for me of the liberality, liberality, of Gallowglass in a very short time. You have also, in Mr. O'Dowla, a local candidate who is bound to be returned for this important constituency. Then your voice will for the first time be truly heard in the British Parliament."

Every speaker offered up incense before Mr. Fireframe's shrine, yet so immovable and so indifferent was his bearing that he seemed to "forget himself to marble." He was quite unmoved when Father Lawnavawla compared him to Themistocles and Epaminondas. Even Mr. O'Martyr's declaration that the condition of Ireland was such that a dictator was necessary to set it right, and that their Chief, Mr. Fireframe, was greater than the greatest of the Roman dictators, did not cause him to wince. Mr. M'Swillan declared "from the bottom of his heart" that "he would shed the last drop of his blood for Mr. Fireframe, a leader that was as terrible for his opponents as Genghis Khan, but as beloved, nay, as worshipped, by his followers as ever was Highland Chieftain by his clansmen." But Mr. Fireframe apparently did not heed.

In the midst of such classical and historical allusions, or "semaylas," as he preferred to call them, John O'Dowla, growing mellow under the influence of punch, insensibly came to regard his neighbour as some classic hero, some marble statue, or at most some "animated bust," lent them for the occasion; and, with each fresh draught, he found himself growing less constrained in Mr. Fireframe's company. The air around him was rife with eloquence, and he began to employ himself in constructing, from the

scraps of oratory he overheard, a "semayla" wherewith to adorn his own speech when his turn came. His face glowed with suppressed merriment and he was unable to repress a squeaky "He, he, he," when he succeeded in stringing some doggerel together to his own satisfaction.

Mr. O'Martyr was speaking again, waving a punch ladle in the air. "How comes it," he said, "that every Irishman almost can make a good, grammatical, distinctly-delivered speech on any subject, and an Englishman can't? Yet in conversation colloquially, the same Irishman speaks awfully bad, wretched grammar, and uses more than three quarters slang; whereas the same Englishman is so expressive and so grammatical in colloquial conversation with a treble hall-marked, gorgeous emblazoned Cockney accent? How comes that, eh?"

"I wish to God you'd turn around an' tell us, for that's me own case to a T!" exclaimed Sporeen.

"Ireland produces the best *Nisi Prius* lawyers," said Mr. M'Quibble.

Father Lawnavawla, who was balancing his knife on his finger, nodded his agreement: "We speak far, far better grammar in Ireland than they do in England, Mr. O'Martyr. I very, very often noticed it meself. An', over an' above that, I know Germans who have come here to Ireland to learn the English language, because, as they said theirselves, we spoke it more grammatically than the English people did. We outshine the English in everything if we only had the liberty and opportunities they have."

No excess of adulation apparently could embarrass the great leader of men. Mr. Fireframe even kept his countenance when John O'Dowla was making his speech: "I don't know who I will compare our incomparable leader to, he, he, he. Although I am acquainted with all the great heroes of ancient and modern times, in some shape or form, I don't know his equal (great cheering). Not Jinjis Khan, not Tamer Lane, nor Brian Boru, nor Bonyparte, nor any of these that have been alluded to here to-night. If I might be allowed, in such a

distinguished company as the present, I'd put it this way :—

> "There's Jingjis Khan, an' Tammer Lane,
> There's Brian Boru, an' Bony-Part,
> There's Hannibal an' Wellington,
> There's Cæsar with his stony heart!
> O'Connell, too, I'll not omit,
> Great Dan we'll never, never blame,
> But all their genius rolled in wan
> Is topped by our great Fireframe!"

The cheering and clinking of glasses which greeted this outburst of poetry, coming from so shrewd a man as John O'Dowla, was literally deafening. The enthusiasm was taken up by the crowds in the street, and Sporeen suggested that, "as dinner was over, the Layders should turn around an' address a few partin' words to the people before they started to ketch the train." The request was complied with, and Gallowglass was advised to "make it hot for the enemies of the National Cause, especially the local Grabbers, and keep step with the country in her victorious march to nationhood."

Then the Leaders descended to their carriage, attended by the entire company, many of whom, either from forgetfulness or actuated by a desire to display their grandeur to the boisterous crowd, held their napkins in their hands or had them stuffed between their vests and shirtfronts, or tied around their necks. The horses were unharnessed with much cursing and shouting, and the drink-elated labourers, stepping into the shafts, drew Mr. Fireframe and his three lieutenants to the railway station, a lighted tar-barrel being carried on each side and a band playing in advance, followed by thousands of loiterers, most of whom were under the influence of Mr. Benmore's whisky or Mr. Porterson's porter.

When the politicians had taken their departure a company of choice spirits reassembled round the hospitable board of the Gallowglass Arms, nominally to finish the contents of the decanters, but it was evident from their whispered conversation and serious mien that a plot was being concocted amongst them. Mulleady, the Dublin

medical student, whom we met before at Quisk's in Dublin, was the idol and law-giver of the group. It appears that Mr. M'Swillan had brought him down with the intention of appointing him successor to Mr. Benmore in the representation of Gallowglass, but the Chief had thrust him aside when he discovered in John O'Dowla a solvent local candidate who would not be a drain on the Party funds. Mr. Mulleady now seemed to be the prime mover in the whispered conference, and he was seen to be giving directions to certain parties who entered the room at intervals and departed with the air of men bent upon some important mission, though the chronic medical student apparently found it impossible to tear himself away from the table.

After some time, the secret arrangements being perfected, Mulleady and half-a-dozen boon companions drew their chairs together, as if resolved to make a night of it, and joined in a round of songs, amorous, humorous and patriotic, Mulleady leading off with the following ditty :—

"The Southern lass is plump and fair,
Her laughter loud and ringing,
Her movements free as vernal air
When o'er her work she's singing.
She's innocent; if you're her swain,
Occasion don't be biding,
Lay on the blarney might and main,
She'll soon grow quite confiding."

Chorus—"Ri tooruloo, 'tis Granua Aile that breeds such wondrous lasses;
Dear Granua Aile, to thee we drink a bumper from our glasses."

"The Northern maid, with agile mien
And blue black eyes provoking,
How sly her speech, how crisply keen,
She hides her sense in joking.
Soft soap she sees through at a glance,
If you're her swain avoid it;
No blarney talk, but sing or dance
As if you ne'er employed it."

Chorus—"Ri tooruloo," &c.

Meantime at the railway station the confusion was of

that hearty Celtic description which, to the unexperienced onlooker, conveys the impression of deep-seated feeling, but which is really no more than the hysteria of an over-sympathetic people. Ignatius O'Dowla, who was returning to Cork, found it difficult to procure a seat.

But at last the train steamed off; and Mr. Maresburrow, R.M., drew a breath of relief as he instructed Mr. Dudge, S.I., to disperse the remaining portion of the reinforcements which had not yet left Gallowglass for home. Imagining that their work was ended for that day, the two officials then betook themselves to the Club to discuss contemporary history over whisky-and-water with Mr. Benmore, Mr. Porterson, and the bank managers of the town.

But they had scarcely settled down comfortably when the alarming intelligence arrived that Gallowglass Castle was on fire and that a mob of rioters were tearing down the gates and piers and dismantling the lodge at Gallowglass Hall. Every available constable was collected, and the inspector set out for the alleged scene of the outrage.

The night was dark, but the gas-lamps had already been extinguished, when the Mahernacrow band, on its way from the railway station, played through the Main Street, followed by an immense crowd of loiterers. A noisy mob collected in front of Cracked Daly's shop and called for a speech, but that orator did not respond. It was noticeable that a dense body of drunken and half-drunken men blocked up the pathways opposite Thomas O'Brile's fine shop and did not follow the band. The O'Briles lived over their shop, which they had lately rebuilt of cut stone and furnished with plate-glass windows of the most expensive kind, having obtained a renewal of the lease from Lord Gallowglass at an increased rent. The crowd assembled in front of the house grew continually denser; but, though the flags and roadway were full of people for the length of a dozen shops at each side, an open space was preserved close to O'Brile's shop.

John O'Dowla, Roland Glenpower, and Sporeen, on their return from the station, having elbowed their way into this empty space, beheld Thomas and Edward O'Brile standing at the hall door, both apparently very uneasy.

"Good evening, Tom! Great day for Ireland!" said Roland, hurrying past.

"Good-night, Mr. O'Brile," said John O'Dowla, passing quickly on.

"Ye're better turn around an' guine," said Sporeen to the father and son.

"I wonder ye speak to me," replied Mr. O'Brile, looking at the whispering, humming crowd outside the cleared circular space round his door.

"Three cheers for the future mimber!" called out Din from Ireland; and the crowd cheered and roared.

"Lave ye be aisy now, an' lave ye guine!" whispered Tim M'Climber to Edward O'Brile.

"Down with the grabbers!" cried Badger, and his exclamation was followed by groans and hooting.

"Case in point," said Sawnuch. "A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse. Guine, guine!"

"Good night, sir, good night, sir!" said John O'Dowla brusquely, sniffing danger in the air, and bustling away.

"Give us a speech, Mr. O'Dowla," cried the Badger.

"Gup to Cracked Daly for it, y' cadday!" retorted the candidate-elect.

"I dunno how 'tis, God forgive me, but I never liked that Tom O'Brile," said Roland. "I was always courteous an' polite an' affable to him, to be sure, as I am to all, even the 'umblest, as becomes a Master o' Hounds, but I couldn't help considerin' him a selfish fellow, always on the look-out for bargains and takin' no interest in huntin' or sport of any description. He's just the stamp o' man that 'ud shoot a fox, or wire his fences."

Just then Bugler pushed his way forward out of the crowd, and, gliding up by the wall, as if to avoid observation, stood behind Edward O'Brile and said: "Master Eddie, lave you an' yer father guine our the street and shut the door an' lave you an' me stand here for a while until the crowd goes away. They's ruffianism plannin' over there in front of O'Pollards's an' Wegless's shutters!"

Mr. O'Brile, overhearing him, said: "There was never a finger riz to me in the street o' Gallowglass where I was born an' bred, an' I'm not afraid now! I won't stir, boy,

I have done nothing wrong. The flags are mine to walk upon to-night as they were always, an' I'll stand at me own door an' give nobody thanks."

The groaning was again repeated, and cries of "Down with the grabbers!" rent the air.

"Better close the strong door leading into the shop, father," suggested Edward.

"There's no occasion, boy," replied Mr. O'Brile curtly.

Mrs. O'Brile, alarmed at the noise, came to one of the upper windows and looked out. They had been taking tea in the drawing-room where it was the custom of the whole family to sit on Sunday evenings. Mr. O'Brile's married daughter, Mrs. Grainger, and her two children, who were paying a brief visit to Gallowglass, as well as Norah and Catherine O'Brile, who were now playing a duet on the piano, were all assembled in the room. While Mrs. O'Brile was looking out into the street, the two children were laughing as they rolled on the hearthrug near their mother. Mrs. O'Brile opened the window; and the hoarse cry of "Down with the grabbers," followed by groans, made itself plainly heard in the drawing-room, during a temporary lull in the music.

Mrs. O'Brile hurriedly withdrew into the room and shut the venetian blinds. Her daughters, divining danger, looked appealingly to her to express her thoughts. The mother sighed, as she sat down, and said: "I never wronged a man, woman, or child in me life, in the town o' Gallowglass. What I and me husband have, we earned it hard, late an' early, an' what we spend is spent at home. Every penny we have is sunk in Gallowglass, either in business, or in houses, or in land."

The roaring of the crowd was still audible through the closed windows.

"Thank God, I sold no drink to-day!" said Mrs. O'Brile.

"They hate you the more, mother, for not doing so," said Mrs. Grainger.

"I'm sure 'twill be nothing, mother," said Norah. "They'll soon get tired and go home. 'Twill all pass off."

"Mother o' Good Counsel, pray for us!" said Catherine.

Just as she spoke a crash of glass was heard, and a large stone flew in through the window, breaking the gasalier and smashing the teacups on the table into fragments. Mrs. O'Brile shrieked. Mrs. Grainger rushed to save her children, crying, "Thank God, the baby is safe upstairs in bed!" The girls stood up and ran to where their mother was sitting.

"Oh, my God! Where's Tom an' Eddie?" cried Mrs. O'Brile.

A fusillade of stones followed, many striking against the walls outside but several crashing into the room, breaking the glass, tearing the blinds and smashing the pictures and girandoles. But the hooting and groans and curses of the crowd were even more dreadful to hear than the crashing stones. The women and children retreated into the farthest corner of the room, Mrs. O'Brile shrieking and clapping her hands, the children screaming with terror, Mrs. Grainger crying aloud for help. Catherine was calling on her father, her brother, the shopmen, the servants, upon God and the Blessed Virgin to aid them. A shower of broken macadam deluged the drawing-room, breaking everything before it, but none of the family were hurt.

"We must get out!" cried Mrs. O'Brile. "Norah, take one of the children. I'll put out the gas. Turn yeer faces to the wall!"

She led the way, and they crept in single file towards the door. On the way Mrs. O'Brile was struck on the back, but they all got out on the landing alive and without serious injury. Then, by Mrs. O'Brile's directions, all the others went upstairs to one of the back bedrooms overlooking the yard, where they cried and prayed and consoled the frightened children. Hearing a crash of broken glass close at hand, Mrs. Grainger rushed into her bedroom which was at the front of the house and where she had left her baby asleep in the same wicker cradle in which she herself had been reared. She found the child sleeping peacefully, and unhurt. But on the white cotton quilt at its side lay a large brown paving stone, and on the floor were many stones of different sizes. Removing the

stone, she took the baby in her arms, rolled up in the bedclothes, and carried the sleeping infant into the back room where it slumbered soundly amidst all the night's tumult.

A knot of rowdies in the very centre of the mob were enjoying the outrage as keenly as if they were Romans at a gladiatorial contest or Spaniards at a bull-fight. These cruel spirits were bellowing forth patriotic songs and leading the crowd in discordant choruses :—

"We'll hang all the Grabbers on a sour apple tree,
We'll hang all the Grabbers on a sour apple tree,
We'll hang all the Grabbers on a sour apple tree,
As we goes marchin' along!
Glory, Glory, Alleluiah! Glory, Glory, Alleluiah!
Glory, Glory, Alleluiah! As we goes marchin' along!"

. . . . . .

"The Golden Aigle shtill do fly
Upon the walls o' Paa-russ high,
The Prooshun throops it do defy
Far from the walls o' Paa-russ!"

. . . . .

"God save Ireland, says the hayro,
God save Ireland, says we all,
Fwether on the scaffle high
Or in battle-field we die,
Sure no matter, 'tis for Erin dear we fall!"

"Tom!" cried Mrs. O'Brile, leaning over the banister, when she was left alone on the landing. Receiving no reply, Mrs. O'Brile caught up her skirt and ran downstairs. Pausing on the last step she beheld her husband, her son and Bugler, standing at the door as if engaged in keeping back some persons who wanted to force an entrance.

"Tom!" she cried, "come in and shut the door!"

But so loud was the din outside, that he did not hear her. Going out, she pushed her way in front of her husband and son, and saw a crowd of men and women within a yard of her, pushing, yelling, cursing and gesticulating. Stones thrown from the back of the crowd were flying over their heads and striking against the shutters, the façia-board and walls, and crashing through the windows overhead.

"Ye cowards!" cried Mrs. O'Brile, "is this the way ye keep holy the Sabbath day? Where's the police? Police! Police! Police! Where are all the useless peelers that were here all day? Are we to be murdered in our house? I know you, and you, and you, ye pack o' vagabonds! Ye'll pay for this!"

But as she spoke, a large stone, which had struck against the façia-board, fell upon her head and Mrs. O'Brile fainted. Her husband lifted her in his arms and carried her upstairs. Edward followed, to see if his assistance was required; and Bugler was left alone in the doorway. The gaunt boy turned round to look after Mr. and Mrs. O'Brile, but at that instant a rush was made by the crowd and O'Rourke was swept into the hall by a torrent of cursing, swearing, shrieking, drunken men and women.

Further resistance was impossible. The mob broke the glass door leading to the shop; they overflowed into the kitchen and out into the yard; they broke open the back door, they spiked the tierces of porter in the bottling store; they drank every drop of liquor that was in the shop, whisky, porter, ale, gin, rum, wine and brandy. The yard was full of male and female rioters. Edward and O'Rourke stood on the stairs a few steps above the level of the hall, watching the mad orgies. For several minutes there was no diminution in the stream of men who poured through the narrow hall, struggling, cursing and roaring. The back gates were broken in with a crash which was heard above the uproar. Then the main shop door opening into the street was unbarred from the inside and the lock was broken open by the crowd outside. Barrels of porter were rolled out into the street and spiked, the men and women taking turns with their lips pressed against the gimlet holes.

There was not a man in Gallowglass brave enough to come forward to save Thomas O'Brile's property from ruin, or to protect him and his family from personal injury, and perhaps death. There were several thousand men, women and children in the Main Street, besides the active rioters who were plundering the house and yard. The shopkeepers were all out-of-doors standing well back

from the mob, many of them smoking, their hands in their pockets, discussing the outrage and riot as if the whole affair were a performance which they had assembled to criticise.

Mr. Maresburrow, who had not accompanied the police to Gallowglass Castle, was helplessly imploring the leading men of the town to come forward and help him to disperse the crowd. Mr. Benmore and Mr. Porterson had disappeared to their respective mansions. There was not a constable in the barrack except Drydoss, who was the guard for the day.

"I wouldn't vinshir anear that door for a million sovereigns! What?" cried O'Pollards, who had just reckoned up the day's receipts for drink.

"Oh, they's a croost[1] of a paving stone!" cried Sporeen. "'Twould remind a body of war or revolution or something, what, begob, I'd rather be here than turn around an' gover to Brile's door!"

"So would I, d'ye see?" said Mr. Wegless. "Tom Brile is a fearful onpoplar man in the town o' Gallowglass to-day! D'ye see that now?"

"He shouldn't hev stood there at that door there, what, so brazen-like, defyin' the people, what!" said O'Pollards. "We must all bow to the people! What?"

At the instigation of the Resident Magistrate, a deputation of townspeople went across to Father Lawnavawla's, which was close at hand, to acquaint the curate with the doings of the mob.

Father Lawnavawla who had been standing at his window for some time, came down and spoke to the deputation at his hall door.

"I daren't interfere without the pastor's authority," he said, "an' if I could, it isn't clear to me that I would. The National Cause owes nothing to Tom O'Brile."

"'Tis too late now, sir, to turn around an' do anything!" said Sporeen hopelessly.

"Look at here, gentlemen," said the priest. "Nothing in the annals of impudence has ever surpassed Tom O'Brile's impertinence this time back. 'Tis the duty o' the police to protect him, an' where are they? Where they always

were, at the beck an' call o' the landlord, protecting the absentee's property."

"True for your reverence," replied O'Pollards. "Tom Brile 'll need a mass said in his house after this night's work."

"Aye, or a dozen masses!" said the curate. "Good-night to ye, gentlemen, an' if ye have any influence on them drunken scamps, send 'em home to their beds!"

"Good night, your reverence!" exclaimed the entire group in chorus, taking off their hats as they spoke.

O'Pollards, elated at the special confidence reposed in him by the curate, said aloud: "Did ye hear what the priest said? Isn't he a true patriot? Isn't he a rale man o' the people? What?"

"He's a very refined gentleman," said John O'Dowla, "very refined entirely. Pup, pup, pup!"

Arnill and O'Larey, surrounded by a group of other Garekiln men, were clustered together like oxen confronting an aggressive dog, and overheard Father Lawnavawla. They had been discussing the circumstances of Donoghue Spilltan's death and were in a state of dumb terror.

"Begannies, min," said O'Larey, "Tom Brile muss be in a bad case, fwin the priests are aggin him. The Lord ha' mercy on poor Donoghue at any how!"

"I'd know," said Arnill, "af I had to give out an ippingun upon Mr. Brile's case, I'd say 'tis bad tratemint, but fwin the clergy are aggin a man there must be some rayson for it that me an' the likes o' me can't exarb! God rest poor Donoghue's sowl to-night."

"Lave us for home, biys, we has to be up airly for the fair. I wish I wuz snorin' onder the blanket. God be merciful to him, but we must all die," said O'Larey, shrugging his shoulders and tramping off towards Garekiln. "No wan can be sure of hisself, oany the priest, these times!"

"Oh, my God!" cried Mr. Maresburrow, R.M., stamping about nervously. "I never thought the people of Gallowglass could so misconduct themselves."

"Faix, 'tis Mahernacrow, sir, not Gallowglass," said O'Pollards in a loud voice, wishing to be heard by the

crowd around. "I'll never stand by, an' hearken to me town run down! What?"

Mr. Maresburrow sighed. He had a good wife and six children; he was in debt, and his life uninsured. But for those things, he assured himself that he would have risked the vengeance of the mob and gone across to O'Brile's door. As things were, there was nothing left but to retire to the Club smoking-room and find comfort in the decanter.

The confusion in front of the looted house was now demoniacal, especially where the men and women scuffled round the porter barrels. But inside the shop and in the kitchen, in the dining-room and in the yard, the riot and plunder were even worse.

When Thomas O'Brile had carried his wife upstairs, his first anxiety was about her. "If she's not dead," he told his daughters, "I'm easy about the rest. Let 'em do their worst! If I had the least notion they'd break into the house I'd have shut the strong door o' the shop, as Eddie told me!"

Mrs. O'Brile revived in a few moments, and her first words were: "Tom, stay here! Let them break and rob and drink away. We have enough to live on, if God spares us our life. Don't go downstairs again." He obeyed her, and sat on the bedside, listening to the din of the rioters who were sacking his house below. Meantime Edward and Bugler had remained on the second step of the stairs, determined to hold it against the rioters with their lives, should the mob attempt to come upstairs.

"If I had a gun!" cried Edward, "I'd shoot 'em like crows! But we never had one in the house!"

"The magistrates udn't give the likes o' ye a licence to keep wan," said O'Rourke bitterly. "Sure if a body wants to shoot a mad dog, he must go for a policeman to do it, if the barrack was tin miles away!"

The stream of rioters surged past underneath them without cessation.

"Will the police never come?" exclaimed Edward. "Great heavens, why haven't we volunteers in this country?"

"If God has any more fire an' brimstone in heaven He

ought to heave it down now! I ax His pardon!" cried O'Rourke. "Wan o' the priests might do worse than t' interfare in behalf of a respectable man like yer father!"

"Ah, the priests will do nothing for us!" said Edward.

Suddenly there was a pause in the stream of plunderers passing through the hall, as if the way was blocked up before them. The crush was dreadful and the crowd near the three young men roared in agony, calling upon those who were pushing in from the street door to retreat, and on those inside to advance.

In the midst of this confusion a still more dreadful evil was impending, for the cry of "Fire!" now rang out from the shop and was taken up in the street. Those who were near the foot of the stairs attempted to rush up, but Edward and Bugler stood firm and beat them back with heavy blows from their blackthorn sticks, deadening the arms of the looters and stunning many of them. Then the first suffocating smell of smoke was perceived and was wafted upstairs, bringing down the whole family shrieking and praying.

The cry of "Here's the police!" resounded in the street outside; and, faster even than they had been running from the fire, the cowardly mob vanished into the yard, and out into the lane and fields at the rear of O'Brile's house.

"'Tis time for ye to come, when we are robbed an' wounded, an' our place, may be, burned!" cried Mrs. O'Brile.

"Where's the fire?" cried Mr. O'Brile, pushing forward.

"In the shop," cried Mr. Maresburrow. "Pack up your clothes and go into the yard before it is too late!"

"If 'tis only in the shop, we're safe," said Mr. O'Brile. "'Tis fireproof!" He went forward into the hall, and drew out a sliding iron door which completely shut off the shop from the rest of the premises.

"Thanks be to God, we won't be burned anyway!" said Mrs. O'Brile.

There was no municipal fire engine, but the police went to the distillery and borrowed Mr. Benmore's, and the fire was extinguished, after everything in the shop was burned

which had not already been destroyed by the mob. Now that the crowd had dispersed and the police had arrived and the fire was put out, the shopkeepers were profuse in their expressions of sympathy and offers of aid; but Mr. O'Brile listened to them in silence.

As he was closing the hall-door, he said to O'Rourke: "Stay here to-night, Dan. As long as I have a crust I'll give you a share of it with me family. You'll never want for work and wages while I live!"

That night in O'Brile's house was one of unexampled trouble. Thomas O'Brile seemed in despair. To have fallen from the high position he had held in Gallowglass, to become an object of remark, to be pointed out by his townspeople as the man to whom the events of that night had occurred, as if he were the person to blame, seemed a thankless ending to his life of toil and upward struggle. He had identified many of the rioters, and others had been recognised by Edward and Bugler; but he determined not to prosecute them, knowing that to do so would only intensify the popular animosity entertained against himself and his family. Besides he also had that feeling so widespread and deep-seated in the South of Ireland, fostered in the school, the confessional and the pulpit, that it is dishonourable in an Irishman to invoke the aid of the English law against a fellow-countryman.[2]

John O'Dowla, in complete ignorance of the proceedings at Ballygrauver, discussing the banquet with Mrs. O'Dowla in the safety of his parlour, after the mob had been dispersed, said: "Well, 'twas little I thought whin I was atin' that dinner that I'd have to fork out a pound for my share of it. But I have it to say for the rest o' me life anyway, that I ate me dinner jig be jowl with a grand gentleman, a real big fellow. Julia's manners aren't a patch upon his!"

"What was he like at all?" asked his wife.

"See, I tell y', woman, Ireland never had a man like him!" said John O'Dowla. "Don't pester me with any more questions! Meself an' the whole of 'em are inclined to folla him, as if we were dogs, God forgive me!"

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" said his wife, "'tis onholy for wan

man, an' he not a priest only a layman, to have such power over others. Every wan follas him though, as well as you, sure, that's wan consolation ! "

" Hugh is out all day," continued Mrs. O'Dowla, after an interval of silence, heaving a deep sigh.

" He'll stay out ! " exclaimed John O'Dowla hotly ; and he locked the front door.

" Parients are to be pitied with their childern nowadays," said Mrs. O'Dowla, weeping. " I had mass offered up for all of us this m—— "

" Don't bother me with your mass, woman ! " interjected her husband. " See ! Yer old uncle trated us shabbily an' yer aunt 'll do the same. The pasthur will grab all she has, never fear ! "

" 'Twill be no loss," said Mrs. O'Dowla. " 'Tis an old sayin' that priest's money always brings bad look ! "

" I'd risk it, amossa ! " said John O'Dowla. " It suits their book well to keep up that superstition ! "

[1] Blow.

[2] The author is personally conversant with the details of an outrage similar in many particulars to that described in the text.

CHAPTER XXIV

"But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong."—Ps. xxxviii. 19.

The scene of destruction which met Thomas O'Brile's gaze when he arose with the first light of dawn to examine his premises on Monday morning was calculated to unnerve the strongest man. His shop, which was his central joy and pride, around which all his other speculations radiated as it were, with its brightly polished brasses, shining glass, carved wood fixtures, and abundant stock, was reduced to a mass of charred cinders. Nothing of it was left but the iron pillars and girders, and the large safe in which he kept his cash and documents. The furniture in the dining-room and kitchen was broken or stolen. In the yard all the pigs were loose and many of them missing; the contents of the bottling store were consumed or smashed into fragments. The back gates being wide open, he saw his three labourers coming to work.

"Where were ye last night?" he said reproachfully.

They hung their heads, and the oldest of them said: "Amossa, we wor here an' we done our best, but fwat could we do among so many? We're sorry for all yer trouble, sir, but we manes to shtick to ye. We war toult not to come to our work this mornin', an' threatened be this an' be that of what 'ud happen af we did, but, sure, we'd shtick to yerself an' the misthuss, sir, fwatever befell us. We wouldn't desert ye at *Ainuch-a-dip* howsomever!"

In the ordinary course of affairs the day which was now commencing would have been the busiest day of the year for Thomas O'Brile, being the great October fair, called *Ainuch-a-dip*,[1] because on that day the entire countryside purchased its year's supply of onions. The Irish farmers and labourers practically cultivate no vegetables except the potato. They value the onion for its

keeping qualities, using it to make a sauce called "dip" which, as we have seen, is eaten with potatoes and stock-fish.

Mr. O'Brile, accepting the man's statement, said: "Get out the two horses, an' put 'em to the butts an' take two loads of onions to the fair." In addition to his other businesses, Mr. O'Brile kept an extensive vegetable garden. "Let ye back in against the curbstone over-right Wegless's public-house," he went on. "'Tis the best stand in the street. When the butts are heeled-in against the curb-stone, let ye untackle the horses and put the stands under the shafts. Wan man 'll do to stay with the butts. Let the two others, when ye have put up the horses, drive out them fifteen fat pigs I marked with a red cross yesterday after mass [2]—I hope none of 'em are missin'—and stand 'em in the best part o' the pig green. If ye're asked the price of 'em before I come up meself, ask four pounds apiece, but don't sell till I go up meself."

"Nayther cattle, nor sheep, nor pigs is to guine to the Fair Green to-day, sir. Th' Earl o' Gallowglass is to be biycotted out of his tolls. All shtock is to be sowlt on the roads!"

Mr. O'Brile opened his eyes in amazement, and said: "Well then, stand the pigs for sale wherever all the other pigs are."

Edward, who now appeared on the scene, was directed to look after the sale of the onions, while O'Rourke assisted in separating the marked pigs and driving them to market.

Returning to the house, Thomas O'Brile met his wife in the kitchen: "There's no trace o' the clerks," she said; "they stayed out all night. Won't it be awful to have the shop closed on *Ainuch-a-dip* Fair?" The servant girls also had been out, as was customary on Sunday evenings, when the house was attacked, and had not returned.

Thomas O'Brile went out into the street and looked up at his house-front. All the windows, which were of plate glass, were shattered; and his fine house, which had been an ornament to Gallowglass, seemed like a tenement house in Dreg Street. The large plate glass in the shop windows, which had been protected from the fusillade of stones

by the shutters, had been broken or melted by the fire. Indignant at the spectacle, he determined to walk up at once to the glazier's and give orders to have the windows reglazed.

"I'd like to do it at wanst for you, Mr. Brile," said the glazier with hesitation, "but it can't be done to-day, nor until this excitement passes off. They'd be broken again."

"What do you mean, James?" exclaimed Mr. O'Brile.

"I mean what you ought to know yourself, sir, that there's such a general feeling amongst the people now that it wouldn't be safe for me nor anyone else to work for you!"

O'Brile was thunderstruck, when the truth dawned upon him that he was to be boycotted.

"I'd do it for y', if I could," went on the glazier, "but, there's them behind this business that no man should cross, an' I won't cross public opinion! I do often read in the papers what happens them that do so! See how they're boycotting the Earl o' Gallowglass himself to-day at the Fair Green."

Mr. O'Brile was a man who kept his thoughts to himself for the most part and acted promptly upon them when advantageous to do so. He now joined his hands behind his back and walked home. Several acquaintances passed him in the street, but nobody spoke to him. This he did not mind as he had never cultivated nodding acquaintances, and rarely spoke to people unless they addressed him.

The bustle of the fair was growing intense in the Main Street. Live stock of all kinds were passing up in droves, but the farmers were being accosted and warned not to drive their beasts into the toll green. The usual confusion was, therefore, increased tenfold, as the cries of the drivers, unable to understand the contradictory orders they received, co-mingled with the neighing of horses, the bellowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep, and the shrieking of pigs.

A drove of bullocks belonging to John O'Dowla passed by, driven by Arnill and O'Larey.

O'Grogan, looking extremely wild, rushed up to Bill

Arnill and shouted: "Don't guine to the Fair Green. Stand 'um on the road. The Green is to be biycotted."

Lar Flauhool was seated in a gig drawn by a gaunt grey horse, following a lot of stately young springers, which his men were driving quietly along under their master's eye: "Keep back O'Dowla's hungry bullocks or they 'll horn me springers, ye looberas!" cried Flauhool from his gig.

"Don't go anear the Fair Green!" shouted O'Grogan.

The perspiring labourers ran round the springers and one of O'Dowla's bullocks received a hissing thwack in the eye with the root of an ashplant, from the effects of which tears coursed down the beast's cheeks and it lowered its head in patient agony. The thoroughfare was blocked by the falling of a horse under a crib of young pigs, and the lots of cattle threatened to get hopelessly mixed.

Two red-and-white strippers got into the midst of the springers: "Drive out thim skeletons!" roared Flauhool. His man flew at one of the thin cows and, wielding his stick with lightning speed and dexterity, smote the poor animal on the nostril, causing her to shiver from tip to tail; and she stood with a look of amazed hesitancy in her face, as if asking whether there was any longer room for her on earth, or if her persecutors expected her to jump over the moon.

The *mêlée* between men and cattle was growing furious.

"Drive that scabby wether from Mahernacrow our the way o' me fine lambs!" roared Maurice Mahone to his men, who were driving sixty late fat lambs to the fair.

"Shake yerselves, ye ladderauns!" howled old Tom Cuddahy, whose labourers were driving some late grass beef to market. "Shthrike an' wallop everything but yeer own mate! Every welt ye puts on me fat cattle will be seen be the buyers an' injure the sale of 'em! Don't lave that bastard of a bull from Ballymuddeen in amongst me cattle! Skirt, skirt!"

"Pup, pup, pup! Don't kill the townspeople on their own flags, ye cawbogues!" cried John O'Dowla, who was hurrying up to sell his bullocks before breakfast, holding the newspaper in his hand which contained the news of his own selection as candidate for the county.

"Shut up, ye huxtereen!" cried old Tom Cuddahy. "What business have the likes o' you amongst min an' cattle? 'Tis selling an ounce o' tobaccy you ought to be in yer shop! What a mimber you'll make, God bless the mark!"

"Go 'long, ye country-reared cawbogue," cried John O'Dowla. "Yer cattle are a damn sight daysinter than yerself, an' not half so offinsive to eye or ear. Are respectable townspeople, accustomed to tidiness an' cleanliness, who pay rates for gas, flags an' pipe water, to be insulted be Rooshans like ye in their own town?"

"Gerraway, ye counter jumper, isn't it from me an' the likes o' me you gets the price o' the coat on yer back?" bellowed Maurice Mahone.

"I never got a penny from y', y' blaguard!" cried John O'Dowla, shaking his stick at Mahone, who did not deal with him.

"Af you didn't, you got it from the likes of him, or you wouldn't have it to-day!" cried old Tom Cuddahy, taking his son-in-law's part. "Mind me cattle! Mind me cattle! Take 'em aizy, an' shtrike all that comes in their way! Aha, ye bosthoons!"

"Ha, ha! Never fear, if it ever comes in me way to do so, I'll keep this in me nose for ye!" cried John O'Dowla, shaking his stick at the large farmers. "Never fear, public opinion will soon take the pride out o' ye! I may forgive but I never forget!"

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed Mahone. "We're too fleshy for y', are we? Mind out, mind out," he roared, addressing his flannel-waistcoated men, "me lambs 'll be spoilt with all the thrash ye're lavin' in among them!"

"How much d'ye want frem?" screamed a jobber.

"More than you or any one belong' to y' could pay, y' blocker[3] y'!" retorted Mahone. "Too well I knows yer ugly puss, since the day you tricked me at Dungberry Fair, tin years ago!"

"Good mornin', Mr. Mahone," said a large dealer, whose figure was well known at every fair in the South of Ireland. "That's a purty han'fle yez have the day!"

"Good mornin' an' good look, Mr. Switcher," said Maurice Mahone deferentially. "They're the last lambs

to be sold this year from Knockakoo, an' they're the best. 'Tis onusual to see yerself out on the road buying stock ! "

" The Fair Green is boycotted, an' I must go with the people. What price ? " asked the great dealer walking into the flock and feeling the lambs on the back and over the loins with his large hands in each of which he could have lifted a lamb from the ground to his shoulders. " Put a price on 'em, Mr. Mahone ! "

" Five an' thirty, sir ! " said Mahone.

" Tut, tut, tut ! Five an' thirty sixpences, is it ? "

" Ho, ho, ho ! You know well I manes wan pound fifteen, Mr. Switcher ! "

While they were speaking the lambs were going forward, keeping their place in the procession of live stock, vehicles and men, which was making its way towards an open space or square at the top of the street.

" They's very bad accounts from the Bristol market last Friday. Oan't y' take five an' twenty ? "

" Af I'd do it for any man in Ireland's ground, 'twould be for yerself, Mr. Switcher, but I wouldn't ! "

Hearing the bargain, old Tom Cuddahy hurried up to assist his relative : " Lave ye shplit the difference ! " roared Cuddahy, " an' make it the thirty shillin' ! "

" Split it again ! " cried Switcher, pinching the lambs on the ribs.

" Af I'd do't for e'er a man in Ireland, I'd do't for yerself, Mr. Switcher, sir, but I wouldn't ! "

" What's yer offer, Mr. Switcher ? " cried Cuddahy.

" Seven an' six an' twenty ! " shouted the dealer. " The world knows I'm a man o' me word ! "

" Whin I meets a daysent man, I likes not to be too skimpish in meself ! " cried Mahone. " But 'tis too airly to be shplittin' yet."

" What d'ye offer 'em fur now ? " roared Cuddahy.

" Thirty-five," replied Mahone, doggedly forcing his lambs forward.

" I'll split it again," cried the dealer.

" That's thirty-wan an' thripp'ns ! " bellowed Mahone. " I'll shplit it now wid y'. That's thirty three an' three ha'-pince ! "

"Even money! Even money! Make it the even money!" cried old Tom Cuddahy. "When we meets a gentleman we must be offhand in ourselves!"

"I'll give th' even money!" roared Mr. Switcher, lifting a lamb and seating it on its haunches between his legs while he felt the flesh on its breast between the forelegs.

"What's yer offer now, Mr. Switcher, sir?" roared old Tom Cuddahy.

"Thirty-wan an' sixpence; I'm a man that never told a lie in me life!" cried the buyer.

"No, Mr. Switcher," bellowed Mahone, cracking his whip, "if me mother's sowl came our the grave, an' tha's a big word, I wouldn't take less than the thirty-three an' three ha'pence!"

"Fwhat nonsense!" roared old Tom Cuddahy. "Gimme yeer hands. Excuse me, Mr. Switcher, sir, gi' me the loan o' yer fist a fwhile. Here, Murrish, gi' me yer paudogue!" [4]

Taking Mr. Switcher's right he put it into Mahone's left, and spitting on the joined hands of seller and buyer, he cried out frantically, with froth on his lips! "Even money! Thirty-two shillings! Is it a bargain? Don't ye break me word!"

There was silence for a moment.

"Will you take it? If you don't I'll keep me money for Ballinasloe," said Mr. Switcher.

"Will you give it?" bellowed Mahone.

"I niver wint back o' me word!" said Mr. Switcher, sticking the point of his stick into some cow-dung on the road and lifting it to mark the lamb nearest to him with it.

"Don't mark me lamb! Don't attimpt to do it! Mr. Switcher, sir!" bellowed Mahone angrily.

The dealer held his stick suspended in the air.

"Heisht, Murrish, heisht!" roared old Tom Cuddahy.

"Don't put a mark on me lamb, I warns ye!" bellowed Mahone.

"Lave ye shplit it agin!" cried Cuddahy.

"May the divil strike me paralatic, if I do!" cried Mr. Switcher, lowering his ashplant. "I'll keep me money till Ballinasloe."

"I'll give 'em for thirty-three!" bellowed Maurice Mahone.

"Shplit it again!" cried old Cuddahy, dancing with excitement. "Gi' me yeer hands agin for the last time!"

"May all the Saints in Heaven be me enemies if I do!" cried Mr. Switcher. "An' I never wint back o' me word yet!"

"What gladiatorin' ye has! Gimme yeer hands!" cried old Tom Cuddahy. He seized the great hands of the dealer and of his son-in-law and joined them as before, spitting on them superabundantly.

"Nanim Day![5] Nanim Day! Wanst fur all!" he roared. "Is it shplit? Is it shplit? Don't break me word!"

"How much?" bellowed Maurice Mahone, looking fiercely at his father-in-law.

"Thirty-two an' sixpence!" screamed old Tom Cuddahy. "Is it a dale? I'll mark 'em meself for Mr. Switcher, if you don't give 'um! That I mightn't but I will! Will ye break me word?"

"He'll gi' me the sixpence for luck!" roared Mr. Switcher, again dabbling the point of his plant in the cow-dung.

"Begor, I'll not!" bellowed Maurice Mahone.

"What luck 'll ye give?" said Mr. Switcher sarcastically.

"Tuppence a head! I never gev more!" bellowed Mahone.

"You're a tough crust," said Mr. Switcher, lifting his plant to mark one of the lambs.

"Don't go near that lamb!" roared Mahone furiously. "Don't spoil the sale o' me lambs be markin' 'em!"

"What d'ye mane, ye cawbogue?" said Mr. Switcher.

"What's yer price?" asked Mahone.

"Yer father-in-law's word, thirty-two shillings an' sixpence," said the dealer.

"I'll not give um less than thirty-three," cried Mahone.

"Don't brake me word, Murrish!" cried old Tom Cuddahy.

"Will you breek yer father-in-law's word?" said Mr. Switcher.

"I'd brake the Queen's word, if it wint to that!" bellowed Mahone.

"Oh, me sufferin' country! I'll take 'em to be rid o' ye!" cried Mr. Switcher drawing a long line on the spine of the lamb nearest him and quickly putting a similar mark on the other fifty-nine.

"You have a bargain," bellowed Mahone, "but God sind ye luck wid 'em!"

"Do ye want any airnest?" cried Mr. Switcher, drawing out a bag full of money from a large inside breast pocket of his vest.

"Put up yer money, Mr. Switcher, sir, I knows an honest man whin I meets him. I wants no airnest from the likes o' you, sir!" roared Mahone.

"Stand 'em up near the railway station for me!" said Mr. Switcher. "I have twelve waggons taken. I'll pay for all I buys at Wegless's public-house at wan o'clock to-day, an' be sure to meet me there."

"God sind ye luck, sir!" cried Mahone and Cuddahy.

"Don't any wan dare to guine to the Fair Green!" roared O'Grogan frantically.

Mr. Switcher strode off against the stream of live stock, inquiring prices, feeling all the beasts whether cattle, sheep or pigs with his great fingers and hitting them smartly with his supple ashplant; and before ten o'clock that morning he had concluded his purchases for the day.

"I have bought fifteen hundred pound worth o' live stock this day, an' I'm ran out o' money!" he said to John O'Dowla, who had been standing by his store bullocks on the street-side more than two hours and had not sold them yet.

"Pup, pup, pup! 'Tis often yer brother said the same to me, sir!" replied John O'Dowla. "I wished you'd buy my bullocks from me now! This is a tiresome place to be mindin' 'em compared to the pens inside the Green."

"Quare things are happenin' these days," replied the dealer. "Will ye take me word for the price of 'em?"

"I would or for twice the amount, sir!"

"I never asked for credit in me life, an' I'm not going to biggen now!" he said, striking the nearest bullock

along the ribs, causing the beast to curve itself with pain ; " to biggen now," he repeated, hitting another ox on the spine, making its back hollow from the force of the blow ; " to biggen now," he reiterated, whacking another on the face and bringing tears to its eyes ; " to biggen now," he went on slashing them round the pen as he waded in amongst them.

" Wasn't it you they s'lected for mimber yesterday ? " asked Mr. Switcher, coming out of the pen.

" 'Twas, sir," replied John O'Dowla, " an' I wished to God they got a better man, upon me faith I do ! "

" Well, Mr. O'Dowla, for nationality's sake, I'll handsel the future mimber. How much for the stores ? " [6]

" Twelve pound apiece, sir," said John O'Dowla.

" How many's there ? " said Switcher.

" Ten, sir. Pup, pup, pup ! " said John O'Dowla anxiously. " They're strong collops."

" They's very bad accounts from th' English markets a Friday. But come, show me yer hand," said the dealer. " I'll give you a hundred pounds into your hand this minute for 'em. Will I mark 'em ? "

" He, he, he ! 'Tis damn tempting an' I so hungry for me breakfast," laughed John O'Dowla.

" Will I mark 'em ? " asked Mr. Switcher.

" I was offered a hunderd an' five, sir ! " said John O'Dowla, smiling. " They're a good foundation for meat."

" Very bad accounts from th' other side. You were offered a hundred guineas ? Very well, I'll give you the guineas ! " said Switcher.

" Take 'em at a hunderd an' ten, sir, an' I wish you luck with 'em ! " said John O'Dowla.

" I'll split it. A hunderd an' seven tin ! "

" Take 'em, sir, and God send you luck with 'em," replied John, who was in a conciliatory mood.

Mr. Switcher pulled out his large scissors and waded into the pen again. He cut three parallel lines in each bullock's hair over the left hip, and cut a line intersecting them at right angles. He seemed to take a deep interest in the operation of marking and kept up a conversation with John O'Dowla all the time he was engaged at it, straighten-

ing each line with his scissors as nattily as a barber giving the finishing touches over the ears.

"The big fellas can't like your s'lection, Mr. O'Dowla," said Mr. Switcher; "but their day is done in Ireland!"

"The big fellas never did a hayporth for me, sir!" said John O'Dowla.

"Waa! Waa! Waa there!" cried Mr. Switcher, rebuking a kicking bullock, as he tastily notched his dorsal hair. "Ye'll bate the big fellas in this fight, blee my word for it, but when all is over ye'll be no better off yeerself!" said Mr. Switcher, putting up his scissors and handing John O'Dowla the price of the cattle, and receiving twenty shillings back as luckpenny.

The tolls received at Gallowglass monthly fairs amounted to several thousands a year. The Fair Green was commodious and well arranged for the accommodation of all kinds of live stock, small pens for sheep in one part, for pigs in another, and large pens for cattle, while a fine open space was provided for the sale of horses. Originally the tolls used to be farmed out by the lord of the soil to a middleman who paid a fixed sum to the Estate Office and made a handsome profit for himself by the transaction. This tax-farmer used to post his men, armed with stout cudgels, at all the entrances to the town, and toll was levied on every sold beast as it left the fair, the unsold animals being allowed to pass out toll-free. But, some years ago, in pursuance of the policy of economy before alluded to, the Estate Office had taken the collection of the tolls into its own hands; new pens were provided, and bye-laws were passed compelling all beasts to be driven into the Fair Green, the tolls being collected at entry instead of at departure.

The new system had become well established and was giving general satisfaction to buyers and sellers, besides adding considerably to Lord Gallowglass's income. But to-day, to the astonishment of every one, the Fair Green was deserted, except for some lots of cattle, the property of county gentlemen, and which remained unsold, for the buyers sided with the farmers to a man and refused to go into the Fair Green. The police were paralysed by the

suddenness of the move and made no attempt to force the cattle off the street. Every one was smitten with fear, fear of some nameless power, some terror undiscoverable, the evidence of whose existence lay in the murder of Mr. Culvert, the assault on O'Brile's house, and a hundred other acts in various parts of the country.

Thomas O'Brile's experience at the fair added a fresh element of disturbance to the already dangerous condition of public affairs in Gallowglass. When his carts of onions were heeled-in at Wegless's, Mr. O'Pollards exclaimed in a sinister tone, full of *arrière pensée :* " These are Tom Brile's onions, what ? Oh, I see ! I s'pose he expex to sell 'em, what ? "

Shortly afterwards Din from Ireland, Badger, and some other inspired rowdies accosted the workman in charge of the carts in threatening tones : " Hook it, you fool, or you'll get yerself stoned or kilt ! " And the workman, seeing a crowd staring at him from the opposite side of the street, slunk off like a coward.

When Thomas O'Brile arrived on the scene, he found Edward standing alone by the carts. He looked into his son's face and blushed, as if he were guilty of some crime, saying : " I'll go up, an' see after the pigs, an' I'll try an' get these onions carried home ! "

When Mr. O'Brile reached the entrance to the pig-green, he found that his labourers had disappeared and O'Rourke alone remained in charge of the fifteen frisky, not overfat barrow [7] pigs, of the Berwick [8] class, which, in an open space, was by no means a light occupation.

Bugler was perspiring. He had been sneering at the pigs, and, if sarcasm could have withered, they should have behaved themselves with decorum : " If I thought I'd ever hev the satisfaction ev atin' ye, I might put up wid ye ; but, is it is, I'm that scalded that I could strangle every grunter in the fair ! Shk, shk, shk ! Ye're craytshurs without a spark o' manliness or daysincy, so ye are ! Hurrish ! Boch-boch-boch ! Blow me, if ye onderstands yeer own langidge the same is every other naathural animal. If 'twas horses a body was mindin' he could hit 'um a welt o' the stick, or he could say, Whee, or Back, or

Whoaf, or Meer, or Prruh, an' he'd be onderstood. An' if ye were cows, ye could be hit on the bones, or Hush, Aha, How, Backeer, would be plain spaking that 'ud save a man's legs. An' if ye were sheep ye could be struck on the face, or I could whistle at ye or hev a dog 'longside me that 'ud lay me stretch at me aize. But, thonamondeel, ye knows a body can't punish ye like any civilised baste be fear of injurin' the bacon. Ye're the dirt o' th' airth an' the refuse o' th' animal kingdom! Damn well ye know I daarn't strike ye, be fear o' spoilin' the mate, an' ye takes advantage of it, bl——"

"Are y' all alone, Daniel?" said Mr. O'Brile, coming upon him unawares.

"I wished I was!" muttered O'Rourke under his breath, darting after one of his irritating companions, a lively bracket[9] barrow, and feeling that a man who had been in such exacting society for over an hour could not be said to enjoy the pleasures of solitude. When he returned with the pig, he said: "I regrets to say, Mr. Brile, that, that—that—that——"

"That'll do, Dan, I know it already," said Mr. O'Brile. "Were you made any offer?"

"No, sir. Not is much is—" and he shook his head up and down, like a horse displeased with its food, flapping his upper against his lower lip. He felt for Mr. O'Brile, but was quite unable to express his sympathy.

Bargains were being clinched all around them, hands were being joined or slapped, differences were being split and resplit, frantic appeals were being made to obdurate persons not to "break dasint min's words," bought pigs were being marked with scissors and raddle, but O'Brile's pigs were passed by as if they did not exist, and hundreds of intimate acquaintances cut their owner deliberately.

Thomas O'Brile was passionate by nature, as most Irishmen are; and he felt his choler rising against the conspiracy of which he was a victim: "Come, Dan! Home with 'em! I'll stand it no longer!" he exclaimed.

O'Rourke was delighted to receive the order and they drove off the pigs, stared at by everyone in the vicinity. A knot of young men, who had been prominent at the previous

day's demonstration, laughed mockingly, and one of them shouted "Down with the Grabber!" The exclamation was followed by a general hiss and a prolonged boo. Thomas O'Brile felt he could have flown at the throats of his tormentors, but he repressed his passion. The hooting, groaning and hissing, once started, swelled in volume as they went down the Main Street; and it made a maddening discord in Mr. O'Brile's ears. The pigs were harassed, as if unintentionally, by low jobbers walking in amongst them and scattering the drove, causing them to run under the wheels of carts and the legs of horses. To re-form the herd after such disturbances, with the groans and hisses ringing in one's ears, was a torturing task. It was a new sensation to behold Thomas O'Brile, the most solvent trader in Gallowglass, in company with the gaunt, ragged boy, driving his own pigs, amidst general execration, down the Main Street, where he had held his head so high a few days before. All business was suspended to watch the worrying of the Grabber. Windows were thrown up and curious heads stuck out, as the booing gave warning that something unusual was coming down the street. Men and women climbed upon the cribs and carts to see the victim of popular odium struggling to save his property in the midst of enemies who outnumbered him by a thousand to one. Cries of "Grabber," "Pigdriver," "Traitor," rent the air. The mob, growing reckless with impunity, began to fling mud and stones, and Mr. O'Brile was struck on the face just as the pigs were abreast of his own onion carts. Edward, beholding the insult to his father, left the onions unprotected and ran to his assistance. But the crowd instantly took possession of the carts and filling their hands with the onions, rained them upon Bugler and the O'Briles, amidst universal cheering and laughter. The scene was one of unprecedented novelty; but the trio held on unflinchingly, while the onions fell in showers about them, often hitting them smartly in the faces and bringing tears to their eyes.

At length two policemen forced their way through the crowd and brandished their saw-toothed swords, threatening to use them against the mob unless it dispersed. But

Mr. O'Brile, addressing the constables, said in a loud voice : " Go away, for the honour of God, an' let me fight me own way through the street o' Gallowglass ! "

" D'ye not want our assistance, Mr. O'Brile ? " asked Handy sympathetically.

" No, Handy, I don't ! The day I'd ask a policeman to save me or me son in Gallowglass street, that day I hope 'twould be the will o' God that I might die ! Let 'em shout an' pelt ! My turn will come yet ! I'll have no one shot or stabbed or struck on my account ! Go away, let ye, for God's sake ! "

The policemen contented themselves with pushing back the crowd, but they were totally unable to cope with the enormous mass of people, and the hooting and pelting continued unabated.

John O'Dowla was one of the most amused of the on-lookers, being on his way to breakfast, with a hundred and odd pounds in his pocket, and was laughing heartily at what seemed to him the funniest situation he had ever beheld, namely, Thomas O'Brile pelted with his own onions. " He, he, he ! " he exclaimed. " 'Tis Ainuch-a-dip in airnest for him, begor ! " But suddenly the smile froze upon his features, for he beheld a sight which almost caused his penurious heart to stop. His eye fell upon his own three-year-old colt being led up the street by M'Gurk, junior, and followed by M'Gurk, senior, whip in hand. He rushed out into the *mêlée* and clutched young M'Gurk by the shoulder, crying : " That's my colt you're leading, you young thief ! "

Old M'Gurk rushed up and roared in as truculent a tone as ever emanated from horse-jobber : " 'Tis not yer colt, except y' wants to buy him. He's my colt, paid for to yer son in Garekiln yard last Saturday in presence o' witnesses. I'll break every bone in yer body if you calls me son a thief. Lay go the coult ! "

John O'Dowla was utterly crestfallen : " How much did ye give for him ? " he gasped.

" Find out ! " said M'Gurk impudently.

O'Dowla had to be satisfied, and wended his way home, his mind busy with his own troubles to the entire exclusion

of everything else. The colt sold! The money paid to Hugh! Hugh absent from home! Had his son robbed him?

Meantime the O'Briles persevered, the pigs were at length driven into the yard in safety and the large gates were slammed in the faces of a knot of women and urchins who had pursued them to the bitter end, long after the men had deserted the chase and resumed their business of buying and selling.

"Thanks be to God, I was at mass this morning," said Mrs. O'Dowla, "makin' me soul, while ye were all rowing up at the fair. How is it to be now with Tom Brile, John; how is public opinion turning?"

"Don't bother me!" he replied, and narrated his encounter with the M'Gurks, winding up with the bitter sarcasm, "There's yer mass for y' now!"

"Gu-vo-gu-deering!" said Mrs. O'Dowla, with irritating calmness.

"You seem to take it mighty cool," sneered her husband.

"The will o' God must be indured," replied Mrs. O'Dowla, sighing.

"You're full of ould saws! Gi' me me breakfast!" said O'Dowla roughly.

"Me Aunt Hannah is dead!" said Mrs. O'Dowla.

John O'Dowla stared at her in amazement.

"Did she lave y' anything?" he said.

"No," she replied, "but she left an enormous sum o' money to Hugh, on condition of his becoming a priest. I had it all from Father O'Darrell this morning."

"I don't care whether he becomes a priest or a minister. But I'll have to get the price o' me colt," said John O'Dowla.

"Never fear, all will be settled!" said his wife. Then, reverting to the case of the O'Briles, Mrs. O'Dowla said: "The pasthor says 'tis a judgment on Mrs. O'Brile because her father evicted a priest long ago."

John O'Dowla was recovering his equanimity at the thought of the fortune left to his son.

"I remember it," he said. "Tom's wife, the present

Mrs. O'Brile, was as nice a little girl as a man need wish to clap eyes on at that time. Her father was evicted from his own house an' he had to take up the priest's house to put his family into it. He was a Catholic, but his wife was a Protestant before she married him. Pup, pup, pup!"

"People changes greatly when they grow up!" sighed his wife. "'Tis Mrs. Brile is the nosey, bitter, little body now, I can tell you!"

"Mamma," said Julia, who just entered the room, "blunt backbiting like that is not only a sin against the eighth commandment,[10] but vulgarity of the lowest description."

"Hee, hee, hee! Julia," said John O'Dowla, describing curves in the air with his egg-spoon.

"You needn't laugh, papa, the subject is a serious one," said Julia.

Mrs. O'Dowla drew an ostentatiously long breath and, discarding English, she delivered a tirade in Irish in which John O'Dowla joined with great volubility; and the husband and wife continued to converse in that language until the end of the meal.

"If I was biggening life again," said Mrs. O'Dowla in Irish, "an' if God gave me me choice, I'd elect to have no childern but boys, an' I'd pray that they might all become priests. There's only wan woman I ever heard of that I envied, an' that's Darerka, St. Patrick's sister, who was the mother o' seventeen bishops!"

"What nonsense, woman, seventeen bishops! They must ha' been hairy bishops that were going then," said John O'Dowla, "when they could afford to have seventeen of 'em in one family."

"Remember, if you plase, 'twas in St. Patrick's family!" said Mrs. O'Dowla.

"I'd rather have 'em in his than in mine, woman. I'm bothered from you an' your Thayology! Pup, pup, pup! 'Twill rain to-day," retorted her husband, and he abruptly closed the conversation by walking out of the parlour.

Meantime at O'Brile's, it was found that the morning's milk was not delivered; and, as breakfast for the children

was impossible without it, Mrs. O'Brile sent O'Rourke to the milkwoman's house. He returned in a few minutes to say that all the milk had been sold and that he had been hooted in the street.

"I'll go down to O'Dowla's meself for it!" said Mrs. O'Brile, greatly mortified.

"Let me go, mother!" said Norah, and the high-spirited girl went off, carrying a large jug in her hand, Edward accompanying her.

John O'Dowla, who had just reached his own doorstep after leaving the breakfast table, espied Edward and Norah O'Brile coming towards him, and he at once darted back into the parlour. "Here's Tom Brile's son an' daughter comin' down street," he said excitedly. "an' she carrying a jug in her hand. Could it be possible there comin' into you for milk, ma'am?"

"Indeed if they are," said Mrs. O'Dowla, "they'll go as they came. I have barely enough o' milk for me own customers. Huh, huh, huh! Whisht, there they are in the shop, as sure as a die!"

"Wasn't it a good guess I made?" said John O'Dowla.

"Well," exclaimed Julia, "I am surprised at seeing Norah O'Brile carry a large common jug like that in her hand through the street. The vulgarity of it amazes me, but the nuns never thought much of her manners I must say!"

"What'll I do?" exclaimed Mrs. O'Dowla, who had sole control of the milk department of the business. "May Saint Darerka direct me!"

"Direct yourself out to the shop an' tell 'em you have no milk. If you don't, Jerry will give it to 'em, for the boy knows no better. Skirt!" said John O'Dowla, stamping his foot.

While Mrs. O'Dowla was hesitating, the shopman was filling the jug and was handing it to Norah O'Brile, full to the brim, when Mrs. O'Dowla came out and clutched his arm.

"I want that milk for me customers, you sir, the Briles were never customers o' mine!" said Mrs. O'Dowla.

Norah O'Brile trembled and her eyes filled with tears.

Edward blushed, remembering the sacrifice he had made to preserve Hugh O'Dowla's fair fame.

"They want it for the children's breakfast, ma'am," said the clerk.

John O'Dowla remained invisible in the parlour, but he said in a stage whisper, loud enough to be heard by all, "Don't give it."

Julia stared icily at her father, and, arising with as much serenity as if nothing were amiss, walked out into the shop.

"Good morning, Norah," she said. "Though I am surprised at seeing a Mortification girl appearing in public with a large common jug in her hand, still your indifference to etiquette is no reason why we should break the commandments. Mother, let Norah O'Brile take that milk!"

"How aizy you have it, girl," said Mrs. O'Dowla. "I must serve me regular customers first."

"Don't give it," again said the sepulchral voice of her husband.

"Mother," said Julia, "if you refused that milk, and if one of the young Graingers died or got sick, you would be guilty of mortal sin and would be sent to the bishop for absolution. I insist upon your giving it."

"God preserve us!" exclaimed Mrs. O'Dowla. "You knows nothing o' the trouble o' making a business, girl, or o' keeping it when it is made."

"Don't give it," said the awful voice of John O'Dowla.

"I wish you'd shut up, father," said Julia, "as you haven't the pluck to come out yourself and refuse it!"

"He, he, he!" laughed John O'Dowla, endeavouring to conceal his chagrin. He came to the door smiling, and was there confronted by his wife and daughter.

"Oh, Ed! Oh, Norah!" he said, rubbing his eyes, as if he had not been aware of their presence before.

"Papa," said Julia, "the milk must be given if we have common charity. I insist on it!"

"Pup, pup, pup! Tw-oh, tw-oh!" said her father, putting his hands behind his back and walking out to the front door and looking up and down the street.

"Jerry!" he exclaimed, turning to the clerk, "here's

a penny and buy me the *Hero's Journal* up at Barry's ! " When the shop boy had gone off to execute the message, O'Dowla said in a stage whisper to Norah O'Brile : " Why didn't you bring a shawl on you, girl, to cover the jug ? "

Norah's cheeks were burning with embarrassment, and she could make no reply to her prospective father-in-law.

" See, ye have the milk now, and take it away with ye in God's name," said O'Dowla, " but I'd lose all me popularity if 'twas known I gave it. See, fire away, let the two o' ye skirt off ! " And as the " future member " spoke, he pushed them gently out of the shop. When they had gone some yards on the way home, he said in a loud voice, meant for the ears of the onlookers in the street : " Never fear, ye'll get no milk from me. Haith ye won't, so ! Tw-oh, tw-oh, tw-oh ! Pup, pup, pup, pup-poo ! "

There was nothing exceptional in John O'Dowla's disingenuous behaviour. The indefinable fear which pervaded the public mind at this dreadful period all over central and southern Ireland fostered the habits of duplicity to which ancient persecutions and evil counsels have always made the Irish prone. A reign of terror flourished under the auspices of Mr. Fireframe, the popular idol, no less paralysing than if he were the most tyrannical persecutor ever sent to Ireland by the British Government. Indeed, a people without independence of mind will always be the victims of unreasoning terror—at one moment religious, at another political, but ever grounded upon the superstitions in which they have been bred.

[1] Onions for Dip.

[2] The Catholic Irish do not hesitate to work on Sundays. Even the "most fervent Catholics" have no scruples on the point, excusing themselves by the saying, "The better the day, the better the deed."

[3] A poor dealer who tries to lower prices for the larger dealers, who pay him a small commission.

[4] Left hand. [5] In God's name.

[6] Thin cattle purchased for stall-feeding, or with the object of being fattened in pasture, are called stores.

[7] Probably equivalent to "barren" (old French *baraigne*); means, in Irish, a gelded pig of either sex.

[8] Trade designation of the class of pig which produces the highest quality of bacon. [9] Brindled.

[10] Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

CHAPTER XXV

"Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane."—EZEKIEL xxii. 26.

THE Bishop of Kilmoy was an old man, "the days of his years" being turned seventy "by reason of strength," as the Psalmist says, the strength of a fresh peasant constitution handed down through generations of unsurfeited ancestors. But the strength of Doctor O'Grenaghan's years was now verging upon "labour and sorrow" save for some exhilarating intervals; and the evil days had loomed in sight when, in the words of the Preacher, the dust of the body begins to crumble before its return to the earth and the spirit flutters impatiently to "return unto God who gave it."

"This is a true saying," wrote Paul to Timothy, "if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." But there are many now living who do not regard "the office of a bishop" and "a good work" as being in any respect synonymous terms. And if such sceptical people had narrowly scrutinised Dr. O'Grenaghan's life for the past twenty years, since his consecration as Bishop of Kilmoy, they would have found much in his record which fell short of the apostolic ideal.

Even a lenient critic would have found it hard to pronounce him "blameless," [1] for he had been concerned in a multitude of episcopal transactions which would scarcely bear the light of day. He was not "the husband of one wife." He was not "vigilant." He was not *always* "sober" at periods of ecclesiastical festivity. He was not of particularly "good behaviour" as a rule. If he could be said to be "given to hospitality" in a certain sense, his guests were always members of the sacerdotal

order. He was not "apt to teach," being, on the contrary, most averse to imparting information. It could not be truly said of him that he was "not given to wine," for his vinous taste was Epicurean. Neither could it be said of him that he was "no striker," for he had frequently struck persons of both sexes upon trivial provocation. It would be false to record that he was "not greedy of filthy lucre," for his reputation had always been that of an avaricious man. He was not phenomenally "patient." It might be predicated of him, as of almost any priest in Ireland, that he was "not a brawler," for he had never figured as a defendant at petty sessions. But it could not be justly said of him that he was "not covetous." If the various convents and orphanages in his diocese might be called Bishop O'Grenaghan's "own house," and if external prosperity be the main test of well-being, an outsider might be disposed to assert that the Bishop of Kilmoy held "his children in subjection with all gravity," and was therefore qualified to "take care" of what Gallowglass people understood by "the Church of God."

His secret relations with Dublin Castle were of the most cordial character, his nomination for a post under Government being tantamount to an appointment for the fortunate nominee.

But we shall not inquire too closely into these things, for happily Bishop O'Grenaghan's character is not of vital import to the present history. Like all those who inflict the most harm upon their fellow-creatures, from Napoleons to eel-skinners, Bishop O'Grenaghan worked his quota of evil upon those committed to his care, under the conviction that he was doing good; and he did his best to make his people accustomed to being skinned for the benefit of the Church.

The bishop drove from Kilmoy to Gallowglass, twenty miles, in a jingle [2] with strong springs which lurched over the ruts and danced over the macadam with a vigour calculated to rouse the most torpid of livers. Indeed driving in his jingle was the only species of exercise in which Dr. O'Grenaghan now indulged; and, all things considered, it would have been impossible to devise a

more stimulating mode of recreation for a man of his years, habits and temperament.

Bessie the Priest threw the gates wide open when the bishop's car appeared before the Parochial House, and Father O'Darrell, bare-headed, holding his biretta in his hand and robed in his soutane, rushed forth to welcome his lord and master. The wheels crunched pleasantly over the abundant sea-gravel, and countless sparrows chirped musically in the ivy, as the episcopal jingle backed in slowly against the steps of Father O'Darrell's front door, which stood wide open for the reception of its owner's most highly-prized visitant. A group of beggars of both sexes forced their way through the gates on the chance of being permitted to kiss the episcopal ring and win the attendant indulgence.

"Welcome your lordship! Welcome to Gallowglass, me lord!" cried the pastor, kneeling on his own doorstep and kissing the amethyst on the bishop's ring.

The beggars surrounded the bishop tumultuously. Even the most inexperienced of them did not make the ever-to-be-lamented mistake which that fervent Catholic, the editor of *Punch*, almost tearfully acknowledges he once made on a somewhat similar occasion. When professional humorists wax serious, their gravity "passeth all understanding"; and the deferential solemnity of *Punch*, in dealing with Roman sacerdotalism, is so intense that it is doubtful if the Pope of Rome has a better friend in England than Mr. Punch and his dog Toby and his Baron de Bookworms.

"I knew it was the etiquette," writes the comic editor, adopting his most serious vein, "to kneel on one knee on being presented to a Prince of the Church and to kiss the ring on his third finger. For this ceremony I was prepared; I had thought it out; I had mentally rehearsed it. On entering the breakfast-room I saw a portly personage standing on the hearthrug. . . . In a second I had made up my mind . . . and before he could make any show of resistance, I was on my knees in front of him, had seized his hand and kissed his ring, with such fervour as nearly sent its owner backwards against the

mantelpiece." [3] It turned out that the person, to whom Mr. Burnand thus eagerly tendered his adoration, was not "a Prince of the Church," but some ordinary priest who had been lounging about the household of Cardinal Wiseman. The beggars from Mahernacrow were wise in their generation and did not mistake Father O'Darrell for the "lord of the Church." On the contrary, Dr. O'Grenaghan, like the kingdom of Heaven, suffered violence at their hands, despite the cuffs and pushes freely administered by Father O'Darrell, and they devoured his lordship's left hand as greedily as if they were famished Israelites feeding on manna in the desert. Three-fifths of the better-class Gallowglass shopkeepers would have "passed by on the other side," if they chanced to see the bishop in their way, rather than go through the superstitious ordeal so eagerly sought after by the editor of *Punch* and the Mahernacrow mendicants.

The belly-band was strained almost to breaking point, and the horse seemed in danger of being lifted off the ground while the bishop lingered on the car-step prior to alighting.

"Be off with ye! Lave or leave the way for his lordship!" exclaimed Father O'Darrell, pushing the mendicants away from the door and clearing a passage for the "lord of the Church," which, I suppose, is the correct style and title for Dr. O'Grenaghan.

The beggars skulked off and returned to the fair to resume their occupation, which differed rather in degree than in kind from the profession followed by Dr. O'Grenaghan and Father O'Darrell; for they too alleged that they possessed the power to bestow the Creator's special blessing on all who gave them money, and they had their rude rites and formularies, their glibly-uttered prayers, their curses, their chants, their precedences and their confiding clients.

In Father O'Darrell's drawing-room there were assembled to meet the bishop four parish priests who, with Father O'Darrell, constituted, so to speak, the cabinet council of the diocese; Dean Linch, of Ballynastackeragh, domestic chaplain to his Holiness the Pope, an austere, hot-tempered

man, who had been elected *dignissimus* by the parish priests of Kilmoy when the last vacancy had occurred in the see, and who entertained a very low opinion of Bishop O'Grenaghan's capacities as ruler of the diocese; Canon O'Grauver, of Mahernacrow, an immense man whose three brothers were parish priests and who was an open adherent of Mr. Fireframe and the Nationalist party; Father O'Keefe, of Furzey Valley, who held the degree of doctor of divinity, one of the junior parish priests, a *protégé* of Bishop O'Grenaghan's, a rising ecclesiastic, who represented the younger generation of Irish priests, a fiery, passionate man, with an exalted idea of his own superhuman powers, and a very low estimate of the laity; and, lastly, Father Pat Flauhool, brother of Lar Flauhool, a rotund, humorous man with curly hair and a high forehead, parish priest of Neenawhoonah, who sang a good comic song and told a funny story when in congenial company.

The cabinet councillors met the bishop in the hall, when he had escaped from the beggars; and, except Dean Linch, who only stooped in performing his obeisance, all knelt on one knee and kissed the episcopal amethyst. For a moment their behaviour was as sheepish as if they had been common Irish labourers, and they got themselves into the most awkward positions in their endeavours to find accommodation for their enormous persons in Father O'Darrell's hall.

"Your lordship must be fataigued or fatigued after your journey," said Father O'Darrell. "'Tis a long drive from Kilmoy to Gallowglass, as I'll have raison or reason to know meself before night, for I'll be taking the road home with your lordship."

"Are you coming to me to make a general confession of all your sins, James, an' make restitution for all the graces an' favours you enjoy be me permission?" said the bishop, opening his eyes waggishly in affected amazement at Father O'Darrell's announcement. And the assembled priests, except Dean Linch, laughed loudly at the episcopal sally.

"'Tis a private matter, me lord," replied Father

O'Darrell, "an' as for making restitution, that would be impossible, for I could never give back all that I got an' all that I owe to your lordship's kindness."

"Couldn't you make a small payment to his lordship on account, James?" said Father Flauhool. "His lordship won't press you for the uttermost farthing. Sure he was always a lenient creditor."

"Times must be bad indeed, if the parish of Gallowglass couldn't meet all its diocesan obligations to the full!" said Canon O'Grauver, who was envious of the prosperity of Gallowglass. "'Twould be something for poor people in Mahernacrow to be payin' be instalment, but there could be no excuse for Gallowglass, the brightest diadem in the crown o' Kilmoy."

"Comparisons are oajuss, Canon," said Father O'Darrell. "Whatever the laity o' Gallowglass have, I suppose they deserve it. People are generally trated or treated according to their deserts, an' now, with your lordship's permission, I'll trate or treat the company in the same way." He rang the bell, and Bessie the Priest appeared with a large tray on which was a magnum of Pommery and Greno's champagne and half-a-dozen glasses.

And when the bishop had refreshed himself, Father O'Darrell invited him to a *tête-à-tête* in the study, and there informed Dr. O'Grenaghan of all the facts connected with the Society of Valiants, which had been divulged in the confessions of Donoghue Spilltan and Hugh O'Dowla. He also informed the bishop of the death of Miss Penser and the terms of her will, in which the lord of the Church showed himself intensely interested.

Then Father O'Darrell put his diocesan in possession of all the facts connected with Hugh O'Dowla's case, not excluding the young man's intimacy with Molly Carew. "And that was what I meant, me lord," he concluded, "when I said I would be taking the road home with your lordship to Kilmoy this evening."

But Father O'Darrell did not speak of the windfall he had received from Mrs. Wegless.

"Very good, James, and in many respects, very wonderful and entirely unprecedented are some of the things you

have told me. Miss Penser died a true daughter of the Church. Though she left meself little or nothing, she behaved like a brick; but I always knew there was a good drop in the Pensers. This young O'Dowla, or Penser as he is to be known hereafter, will be a pillar of the Church yet; and to yourself, when I am dead and gone, will be due the credit. Let us keep this affair of Miss Penser and her nephew to ourselves. You know, James, I always treated you as me right hand man. I gave you the best parish in the diocese when you were only a little past forty, and I hope yet to see you my successor, but do not breathe a word of that to the others, for they would only hate you in proportion as I love you."

Tears welled up in Father O'Darrell's eyes and he could scarcely speak for emotion. He went on his knees before the bishop and kissed his ring, saying, "My lord, I only crave your blessing; it is all I seek on earth."

And the bishop raised his hands over him and said in soothing tones: "Bless you, my son, I remember you since you were in petticoats!"

"There will be four thousand pounds coming to me under Miss Penser's will, my lord, and I pledge my word to pay you the first thousand I receive." The pastor intentionally under-estimated his legacy by over £2000.

"Thank you sincerely, James. I am in need of money, but God always sends it when I want it, as in the present case. I accept your offer with gratitude. But now about the murder and the Secret Society. I think we may take those that are below into our confidence on that point. They are all long-headed men, even Pat Flauhool, for I often notice that he is more tactful and deeper than many a man that has a greater reputation for shrewdness."

Father O'Darrell rose to his feet and they went back to the drawing-room and discussed with the cabinet council the more important matters awaiting consideration at the conference. It was decided that no action was to be taken in reference to Mr. Culvert's murder, beyond mentioning it, and that the facts connected with the Society of Valiants were not to be broached at all to the general body of priests at present, beyond passing a resolution that

all penitents were to be narrowly questioned with regard to secret societies and that membership of any such body was to be considered a " reserved sin," for which absolution was not to be given except by the bishop or his vicar-general.

" I would condemn that murder openly," said the bishop, whose leaning was towards the Government, " but these secret societies are dangerous things to meddle with except in a vague, general way. We can't go against the people nowadays."

Then the cabinet council partook of early lunch and set off for the chapel to meet their less distinguished colleagues.

Meantime the ordinary priests had been arriving at the chapel singly or in pairs, most of them having refreshed themselves at the houses of friends in town. Many of them also had business at the fair, such as the sale of horses or cattle, or the receipt of money promised by their parishioners, for Gallowglass October fair was a recognised settling day in all the barony of Killafastare. Fees due for weddings, funerals and masses were paid with all the scrupulousness of debts of honour which could not be sued for. As a rule such ceremonies were paid for in cash down ; but, as there will always be exceptions to the most stringent rules, so there were some farmers at Ainuch-a-dip Fair who had promised to " pay the priest " ; and those debtors were now gently reminded of their engagements by their sacerdotal creditors before " their reverences " betook themselves to the conference.

The vestry was not large enough to afford sitting accommodation for all the priests who attended, and the more muscular curates, who had to stand, disposed of themselves in undignified attitudes, leaning against the walls as if they were holding the structure up with all their accumulated weight. It was " Rome indeed," but there was not " room enough," for there are probably no men in the world who require more space than Irish priests. Bachelors, each accustomed to fill an entire house, wont to recline at full length in armchair and sofa, or to pace the precincts of their gardens, smoking unbuttoned after

meals, or volubly reciting their office, as if there were no other human beings on earth but their omnipotent and omniscient selves, the Irish priests require a wide haven at which to ride at anchor. The Bishop made the sign of the cross as he took the chair, with Father O'Darrell beaming on his right, Dean Linch sceptical on his left, Doctor O'Keefe thoughtful in front, and Father Flauhool laughing close at hand. Then young Father Gubbraw, fresh from Maynooth, the curate of Furzey Valley, read a paper on "The Duties of Women," to the intense, but studiously-concealed amusement of the bishop and the elder priests. Father Gubbraw contended that the men of Ireland were the earners of money, while the women were the spenders; and he proved, by a series of syllogisms, that the women receive millions of money every year from the men to be expended on household maintenance and family apparel; that this money was improvidently and unfruitfully expended in the main.[4] "In fact, me lord, right reverend, very reverend and reverend Fathers," said Father Gubbraw, "it is obvious, not only to the refined and erudite audience I am now addressing, but even to the most uncultured intellect, that the women, or money-spenders of Ireland, should give the men, or money-earners of Ireland, as good if not a better result than they do, and for a yearly payment of four or five million pounds sterling per annum less than they receive at present."

This conclusion was welcomed with boisterous applause from the general company and hearty laughter from the bishop and senior priests.

"The four or five million pounds which would be thus spared," continued Father Gubbraw, "could be put to a multiplicity of profitable uses. Amongst other meritorious purposes on which it might be employed I may mention that some or all of it would be badly wanted for the Church. New buildings, such as churches, convents, presbyteries,[5] or parochial houses,[6] are required in every diocese of the country. Endowments are required for professorial chairs in the theological colleges in each diocese and for the national theological college at Maynooth, which is the pride and glory of this country and

which alone now gives Ireland the right to her ancient title of 'the island of Saints and Scholars.' In fine, me lord bishop, right reverend, very reverend and reverend Fathers, I invite your special attention to this great national economy, with which, I must confess, I have dealt with great misgiving in the presence of so many saints and scholars, so many deep thinkers and profound theologians, presided over by one of the most learned doctors and brightest luminaries of the Irish episcopacy."

"There's a matter of serious importance which I wish to draw your lordship's attention to," said Dean Linch with great austerity. "Occasions such as the present, when we have your lordship in the chair and so many of the priests of the diocese present, young and old, are all too rare to be missed."

Dean Linch, it may be mentioned, was nicknamed All Too Rare, not only by the priests, but by many of the laity of the diocese, in consequence of his frequent use of that expression.

"All too rare," he continued, "not to be taken advantage of for animadverting on a practice as foul as it is mean, as anti-Catholic as it is contemptible. I allude, I regret to say, to the proceedings of the Bible-reader who styles himself rector of the Protestant parish of Ballynastackeragh, and who has the impertinence to call himself an archdeacon. Properly speaking it is his termagant and virago of a wife and not himself (laughter) who should be called rector of the spurious parish of Ballynastackeragh and archdeacon of the spurious diocese of Kilmoy, in the spurious, self-styled Protestant 'Church of Ireland.'

"I wouldn't waste your lordship's time speaking about this Swaddler[7] of a fellow and his wife, but that some of our own Catholic people have been deceived by him and, wretches that they are—dogs, as I might call them, returning to the vomit of error—they have imperilled their holy faith by frequenting some of this Souper's[7] company-keeping performances. Penny-readings is the name this fellow gives his entertainments. He says he is going to hold them in what he calls his parochial hall all through the winter. I never heard of such an expression as

'penny-readings' before. I suppose it means reading so much of the Bible for a penny, and so much for twopence, and so on, like th' ould letter-writers used to write or read a letter of a certain length for a penny and double that length for twopence, and so forth, but they used to do it oftener for nothing. But whatever it may mean, I'll have no more penny-reading in Ballynastackeragh, if keeping away the Catholics can prevent it. I denounced from the altar those young people who went to this devil-show. I asked them if they had seen the minister appearing in his horns and his cloven hoof, and I told them that if they had not so seen him at the first performance, they would not fail to see him in his true guise and to smell the brimstone from him at the second performance. Oh, I gave it to 'em, me lord! 'Tis all too rare we get such a chance nowadays of striking a blow for the Faith and our Holy Church." [8]

Dean Linch sat down amidst enthusiastic applause, and Dr. O'Keefe, of Furzey Valley, rose to his feet amidst loud clapping of hands.

"Me lord, right reverend, very reverend and reverend Fathers, I listened to the paper of Father Gubbraw with cordial and healtfelt pleasure, as I am sure did every member of this sacred and illustrious assembly. To see a young priest, just ordained, devoting himself to such serious questions of political and domestic economy, questions which vitally affect the national weal, must always be a proud and pleasing privilege to the dignitaries of the Church. There is no Church but the one, true Church, the spouse of Christ Himself, which could produce such a youthful apostle as Father Gubbraw. He is my curate, but, I fear, after the display of eloquence and philosophy which me lord bishop is after hearing from him to-day, that he will not be long left to me in the remote solitude of Furzey Valley where like 'many a flower of brightest ray serene' he now, so to speak and metaphorically, 'wastes his sweetness on the desert air.' (Applause and cries of No, no!) I too have a little matter with which to trouble your lordship for a few moments. You must all have noticed to your sorrow how what they call secular

learning, such as astronomy, chemistry, natural philosophy, profane history, mathematics, and a host of other things, is ousting sacred literature from the proud position which it ought to hold. Theology is, as ye are aware, the queen of sciences. What is their dirty chemistry, or their tiresome, sordid mathematics, or their unreal and visionary astronomy, or their profane history, such as Thucydides, Julius Cæsar, Tacitus or Hume, or their profane literature, from Homer to Virgil, from Horace to Milton and Dante, from Shakespeare to Tennyson and that execrable wretch, Browning, when compared to the glories of theology the queen of all the sciences, the quintessence of all knowledge? (Loud applause.) Well," continued Dr. O'Keefe, "I happened to walk into the national school in Furzey Valley the other day, of which I am the manager, of course, and I found the schoolmaster, who is somewhat of an impudent fellow, descanting to the children on the magnitude and wonders of the solar system. Being a newcomer, appointed by meself, he seemed to be under the impression that I approved of it, for he went on with his ramaish [9] in my presence. Now, me lord, this is how I dealt with him and I mention the matter for your lordship's approval. I waited till he was done and then I said: 'Children, ye have heard the schoolmaster describing to ye the beauties and marvels of the solar system, let me now call yeer attention to a system which is greater than a thousand solar systems and that is the system of the Church of God, as represented by me. The schoolmaster will corroborate me when I assert that there are upwards of ten thousand solar systems. This one he has been describing to ye is only one out of ten thousand. There can therefore be nothing particularly wonderful about it any more than there is about one tree in a wood of ten thousand trees, or one stone in a wall of ten thousand stones. But our solar system and the ten thousand other solar systems are all the property of the one, true God, represented here on earth by the one, true Church, and represented here in Furzey Valley by me, as the pastor of this parish, all the souls in which are committed to my care by the Almighty Creator of all the

solar systems. Therefore, am I not correct in saying that the system of the one, true Church surpasses the solar system as much as God surpasses man. The mighty men of God who lived in the olden times used to set the laws of this much-vaunted solar system at defiance, treat them with contempt. Ye have heard how Joshua stopped the sun and moon in order to accommodate his own people, and how the sun was brought backward for Hezekiah, and how the sun was darkened at the Crucifixion? Well, we, priests of God's system or Holy Church on earth, are invested with the same power as ever Joshua wielded. *Behold, I shall be with you all days even to the consummation of the world.* These are God's words to the Church, to us, to me, and our power is what is called latent. But, but, it may be revealed!' "

"When our own training college is properly endowed, we'll be able to produce schoolmasters of whatever type we want, doctor," said the bishop.

"Now, me lord, right reverend, very reverend and reverend Fathers," said Doctor O'Keefe in conclusion, "I state this to know if ye approve of my conduct; and, if ye do, let my behaviour be a guide to the younger priests on similar occasions, when they may see fit to visit one of their schools. We cannot be too jealous in guarding our high and God-given prerogatives in this age of unbelief and free-thinking."

The applause was overwhelming when Doctor O'Keefe resumed his seat.

Then the bishop arose and said solemnly, "I entirely concur in your conduct, Doctor O'Keefe, on the occasion which you have so forcefully and so rhetorically and so graphically detailed for us with true Irish eloquence of the very highest order. If, right reverend, very reverend and reverend Fathers, Doctor O'Keefe was right in stating that no power on earth outside the one, true Church could produce a youthful apostle like Father Gubbraw, then I may say with equal truth that it is only the one, true, holy, apostolic, Catholic Church which could produce within its fold a divine of such high powers as Doctor O'Keefe himself."

When the bishop resumed his seat, Father Lawnavawla arose and said: "Me lord, right reverend, very reverend and reverend Fathers, there is a matter of some moment to the Church which I desire, with yeer permission to bring before yeer notice. If the right reverend Dean has reason to complain of the proceedings of the Bible-reader at Ballynastackeragh, we have no less cause for objecting to the conduct of even a worse type of heretics here in Gallowglass. We all know by repute the sect called Presbyterians. They are of a more foul, odious, and repulsive type than the pious frauds who dare to call theirselves the Church of Ireland; because, though the Church of Ireland heretics refuse to acknowledge his holiness the Pope as the sole vicar of Christ on earth, they, at any rate, believe in bishops, me lord, and they tender us that sincerest species of flattery, which is imitation, by making the pretence of having spurious bishops of their own. But these Presbyterians don't believe in any bishops at all. I'm told that every man regards himself as a bishop. (Laughter.) I don't vouch for the truth of it, but I hear it said that M'Cameron, the distiller, is equal to a bishop, and that Gordon Campbell, the manager of the weaving mill, is as good as an archbishop. In fact, Campbell is what they call an ordained elder, is in holy orders in fact—a man that smells of wool-grease and machinery oil every day of the week! Did your lordship ever hear of such ridiculous sacrilege? But what can we expect from infidels outside the fold of the wan, true Church? Well, to come to the point I want to call attention to, these Presbyterians have a little shanty here that they built lately and have the impudence to call a church, and a minister of theirs has come to poison the Catholic atmosphere of the town by residing with his family amongst us, as if the Protestant minister, the one variety of heretic we already have here, were not enough for us. No less than three girls of the servant class have consulted me in the confessional and at my house as to whether they should accept a place as domestic servant in this Presbyterian minister's household and I advised them, in my capacity as their spiritual director, not to imperil their Faith by doing so, no matter

what inducement might be offered to them, even if it were the wealth of Golconda itself. I understand that this heretic Bible-reader has not as yet got a servant, nor is he likely to do so, unless one of his own people send him wan o' their children to take up the post. An' that's not likely, for if I were to go through the list of Presbyterians in the parish of Gallowglass, I wouldn't find wan poor enough to supply a maid-of-all-work."

"Excuse me, Dinnis," interposed Father O'Darrell. "Are you forgetting that William Carew——"

"He's not in our parish, sir," said Father Lawnavawla.

"He's in my parish," said Canon O'Grauver of Mahernacrow, "the mother is a penitent o' mine. 'Twas I married 'em twenty years ago an' drew up the pre-nuptial contract saving the children for the Faith. I remember it well."

"I'm glad to hear it, Canon," said Father O'Darrell, forgetting himself, "for I take this opportunity of requesting you, in the presence of his lordship, to recommend Mrs. Carew to send her night-walker of a daughter, called Molly, into the service of this Presbyterian minister at once."

"I'm not prepared to take your *ipse dixit* for it, James, that there is such a thing as a night-walker in my parish," returned Canon O'Grauver hotly, in complete ignorance of Father O'Darrell's motives, "and, over and above that, I can manage my own parish without any outside advice whatever, saving always such counsel as his lordship may be pleased to give me and which will be always submissively accepted." Canon O'Grauver had not yet given up hope of translation from Mahernacrow to some more prosperous parish; and, as the bishop was the autocrat in all matters of preferment, the Canon was most deferential to Dr. O'Grenaghan.

"Peace, peace!" exclaimed the bishop, raising his hand. "There isn't a better-managed parish in the diocese than Mahernacrow, an' I can say as much for Gallowglass, so let there be no contention."

"Aren't y' aware, Canon O'Grauver," said Father

O'Darrell calmly, "that Carew's daughter was found by the police in Brady's Wood a Saturday morning in company with young Eddie O'Brile, Tom Brile's son, after the murder of Mr. Culvert?"

"I am not; but even if that be so, it is more of a reflection on you than on me, for Brile is a parishioner o' yours, an' Brady's Wood, where this murder took place, is in the parish o' Gallowglass."

"Let us postpone this matter for private discussion after the conference," said the bishop. "You may take my word for it, Canon O'Grauver, that Father O'Darrell is right in his suggestion, as you will be the first to acknowledge yourself when you hear the particulars from meself. James only had time to give meself a brief outline of the business before coming up here to the church from his house, but I apprehend his object to be for the good of the Church. Let us have no more about it now!"

"I bow submission to your lordship," said Canon O'Grauver.

"I can't see why we shouldn't be taken into confidence," said Dean Linch. "It is all too rare that we confide in one another and in the younger clergy."

"I have given my decision, Dean, and let it rest as it is!" said the bishop firmly.

Father Pat Flauhool rose with a good-humoured smile and said:

"My lord bishop, I have a case of conscience to bring before the conference—" And there was a general titter, for Father Flauhool's cases of conscience often bordered on broad farce and were generally reserved for the close of the conference, when they played an important part in re-establishing good humour after many an angry discussion.

"Excuse me, Pat," said the bishop, "but will it take long? We have some grave matters to discuss yet— —"

"Oh, no, not long, me lord, not longer than one of Father Lawnavawla's sermons when he wants to get away to a political demonstration."

And, amidst general laughter, Father Flauhool continued: "A parishioner o' mine, a female parishioner, has

a feud, or a vendetta, or a grudge, or a faction-fight, with a neighbour, also, need I say it, a female. Both these ladies hold scolding matches on the roadside before each other's doors in the village of Neenawhoona. In fact one of the commonest forms of entertainment in the village is a cursing-match between these two viragos. The heretics say that 'whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing and obtaineth favour of the Lord.' [10] We say more truly, 'He that hath found a good wife hath found a good thing, and shall receive a pleasure from the Lord.' [11] But it cannot be said of the husbands of these women that either of them has found a good thing in any sense of the word. I pity the men from my heart, and I am very lenient on them for their little breaches of the commandments of God and of the Church, when they come to make their confessions at Christmas and Easter. For nine years, while I'm in Neenawhoona, these women never spoke to each other except in anger. But last month I patched up a peace between 'em and I made 'em shake hands. Oh, it was like bringing fire and water together! Well, one of 'em isn't all the bad, and she took to the new conditions of life somewhat kindly. It was strange for her or her children to be able to pass the neighbour's door without getting a curse, or a blow, or a pail of dirty water, but she accustomed herself to the deprivation and rather liked it in fact. The other, however, seems an incarnate fiend and felt lonesome and sore without her daily tongue-exercise and her old-established feud. This evil-disposed woman was walking to Gallowglass some days ago an' was overtaken on the road by her late enemy driving a donkey-cart with a fat pig in it which she had sold to Maurice Sawnuch. She stopped her cart and offered her neighbour a lift and the evil-disposed woman accepted it, getting into the cart with the sleeping pig and sitting down behind its owner. My lord, right reverend, very reverend and reverend Fathers, I needn't describe to ye how helpless an animal is a fat pig, lying panting on its side, inhaling its modicum of breath through nostrils which are like two gimlet holes in a five-shilling piece (laughter). Well, the pig's nostrils were

close beside the bad woman's foot, and her eye was caught by their working, and she noticed the opening and closing of the two holes, and yielding to an overmastering temptation to injure her enemy, she put forth her foot and planted the sole of her boot on the two nostrils. She did so quite gently. The pig did not stir, I am told, did not even change its position. But when the woman withdrew her foot the nostrils no longer moved. Frightened at the stillness of the pig, the bad woman began to converse volubly with her well-disposed neighbour on every topic she could think of, until they reached Gallowglass, when it was found that the animal was dead and the butcher refused to take it, except at a greatly reduced price which the woman had no option but to accept. The two women cried equally loud, I am told, in the Main Street of Gallowglass, so that a passer-by couldn't tell which of them it was that owned the pig; or, rather, it appeared as if both were equally grieved for its loss. They adjourned to Wegless's public-house and drowned their sorrows, as the poet puts it, in the flowing bowl. When they returned to Neenawhoona the owner of the pig came to me and seemed to censure me somewhat for having made peace between her and her neighbour. 'For, yer reverence,' says she, 'oany for yerself I wouldn't be after giving her a lift on the road, an' I'm sure 'twas she put th' evil eye on the pig.' I listened to her an' I accepted a donation of five shillings which she insisted on my taking to offer up mass for her to relieve her from the power of her late enemy's evil eye, as she puts it (laughter). When she was gone, I sent down for the other woman and she came up to me. I adopted a severe course with her, me lord. I took me riding whip in me hand, 'Kneel down,' says I, 'an' prepare to make your confession to avert the judgment o' God on yerself an' all belonging to you!' I can tell ye the beldame began to squirm fast enough, and she there and then made a clean breast of the whole occurrence. She gave me a pound, in return for which I agreed to say four masses for her intentions. As she seemed genuinely sorry, I gave her conditional absolution, and she seems now most completely subdued; but she is to come to me

again a Saturday. Now what I want the advice of the conference upon is this ? How can I compel her to make restitution for the loss sustained by the owner of the pig ? To ask her to do so would be tantamount to disclosing her crime to her late enemy and revive the old strife anew."

" True," said Doctor O'Keefe, " I suggest, my lord, that Father Flauhool should calculate the difference between the price paid for the dead pig and the price which would have been paid for the live pig, and that he should impose it as a penance on this woman to pay that sum to himself ; and he, in return, should offer up masses for it, not only on behalf of the giver of the money, but also on behalf of the woman who lost the pig."

" A capital solution, which does credit to your erudition as a theologian, doctor ! " said the bishop. " It has my entire concurrence."

" Now, my lord," said Father O'Darrell, " I have to invite the consideration of the conference to one of the gravest incidents which have happened within the memory of man in this parish. The murder of the Earl of Gallowglass's agent is a matter of world-wide notoriety by this time. Whoever may have been guilty of it, the act has been done and cannot be undone. On yesterday at first mass I made what I considered to be a suitable reference to it from the altar. I did my part——"

" You did more than your part, sir, as I heard from those who were present," put in Father Lawnavawla.

" Well, lave that be, or leave it be, as it may. That's past an' gone too. I told your lordship briefly what I said about it, and, having regard to the remarkably fine site for Gallowglass new church," continued Father O'Darrell, " which I was promised by the late agent and which promise was ratified by Lord Gallowglass and will be at once made good by him——"

" Don't count your chickens till they're hatched, James," said Canon O'Grauver. " Beware o' the sassenach smile ! "

" *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes !* " said Doctor O'Keefe.

" Well, let ye think what ye like, I have me own opinion and it is that the granting of the site will not be inter-

fared, or interfered, with by anything that has occurred. What I desire to say now is this," continued Father O'Darrell, "that we had better endeavour to steer an even keel in this quarrel between the landlords and British Government on the one side and the tenant-farmers and the agitators on the other side."

"I vote that this murder of the land agent be not considered at all. It is not before us," interposed Doctor O'Keefe. "We all carry our lives to some extent in our hands, under Providence, and if men choose to engage in risky occupations for the sake of gain, such as the business of land agent is at the present juncture, they must be prepared to take the consequences. We have no love for landlords, nor land agents, above in Furzey Valley, I may tell ye!"

"Order, doctor," said the bishop, "we all sympathise with the people, but it is the ultimate interests of the Church that we have to consider here and not our sympathies with the people. I believe that the interest of the Church is that we should side with naythor party as a body, that we should not pass any resolution, for instance, in favour of a fresh Land Act or a Labourers' Act at this conference for publication in the Press. Each curate must be entirely subject to his parish priest with regard to any action he may take in connection with the agitation, and each parish priest must consult with me, whenever a public meeting is announced to be held in his parish, as to the course he should pursue in regard to it. Meantime let each of ye be very circumspect in yeer conversation to yeer flocks about the Land Agitation. Fall out with nobody over it. Go a little o' the road with 'em and then go a part of the way in the opposite direction. 'Twould never do for us to burn our boats, as the saying is. If ye must talk about public questions, let all yeer conversation be about education, university, intermediate and primary. That'll give yeer eloquence scope enough and throw 'em off the scent as to our real opinions. Until the next conference then, which will be held in Kilmoy, let all yeer conversation be about education."

When the applause which greeted the conclusion of

the bishop's statement had subsided, Father O'Darrell said: "Before a resolution is passed on this question, me lord, I wish to say a few words in reference to my new church. I rely upon the site, but I have a further announcement to make to the conference and it is this, that the death of Miss Penser puts me into possession of a residuary estate which I expect will come to about two thousand pounds, and, with that sum of money, I propose to start building as soon as possible. I will organise a large bazaar, which I trust your lordship will open for me, and we can then make a statement which will satisfy their curiosity and induce them to subscribe liberally——"

"I object," said Father O'Skeerd, parish priest of Ballyslochter, a bitter opponent of Father O'Darrell's. "There is work more wanting to be done——"

"Order," said the bishop, who looked with disfavour on Father O'Skeerd.

"When you have a nest-egg of two thousand pounds and a site," said Father O'Darrell, again understating his legacy, "and a successful bazaar in prospect——"

"We'd like to see the official valuation of the assets in the will under which you say you oany get two thousand pounds. It might be nearer to six thousand——"

"I command you to be silent," said the bishop sternly.

"Behold, thou hast mocked me and told me lies!" continued Father O'Darrell, with a meekness which intensely irritated Father O'Skeerd; "but to resume my argument, when you have a substantial sum of money ready to be devoted to this new church, when you have a bazaar in prospect——"

"Yes," exclaimed Father O'Skeerd, "at which you'll make a thousand and acknowledge five hundred."

"Father O'Skeerd," said the bishop, "I command you, as bishop of this diocese, to keep silence. Do not drive me to exercise my power any further." And the entire conference expressed its disapproval of Father O'Skeerd in such unmistakable fashion that the pastor of Ballyslochter collapsed into a surly silence which he did not again break.

"It would be silly beyond reason to delay the inception

of our new church," resumed Father O'Darrell; and a resolution was passed unanimously pledging all those present to help on the proposed new church at Gallowglass by all means in their power.

"I have a grave matter to broach, me lord," said Father O'Loobera, curate of Ballyslochter under the rule of the stony-hearted O'Skeerd. "Blood, I say it with horror, I might say with loathing and terror——"

"I rise to order," exclaimed Doctor O'Keefe, "we have decided to take no action in reference to this murder."

"I'm not referring to the murder, doctor," said Father O'Loobera, blushing to the roots of his hair.

"What's the question, Father O'Loobera?" asked the bishop, "you must know that we're pressed for time."

"I won't delay your lordship," said the curate, "but it is a matter on which I want advice."

"Have you consulted your parish priest?"

"That he has not, me lord," cried Father O'Skeerd, "an' I wished your lordship would relieve me of him, for he's one of the most obstreperous curates in Kilmoy."

"Go on, Father O'Loobera," said the bishop who disliked Father O'Skeerd.

"Thank you, me lord! Blood, I say, blood has been spilled in the sanctuary at Dunmourne, which is, as your lordship knows, the name of the chapel-of-aise of which I am the curate in charge."

Dead silence fell upon the assembly.

"Blood?" said the bishop incredulously.

"Well, yes, blood, me lord!" said Father O'Loobera, an ignorant priest who, unlike most of his brethren, was as superstitious as any of the peasants on whom he practised his professional arts, and was on that account made a target for sacerdotal raillery.

"What do you mean, O'Loobera?" cried the bishop testily.

"I mean, me lord, that a bold young vagabond, a scholar in the national school, shed blood, the blood of a fowl, inside the altar rails of me church at—" A loud burst of laughter filled the vestry, mingled with cries of "Go on, O'Loobera!"

THE PRIESTS IN CONFERENCE

"Might I venture to ask your Lordship if any special ceremony will be required [illegible]"

"I rise to order," said Doctor O'Keefe. "Did not Moses sprinkle both the book itself and all the people with blood? Did he not sprinkle the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with it likewise?"

"I stand corrected, doctor," said Father O'Loobera, "but this young urchin chased one of my hens into the chapel with stones and broke her leg and left her so, bleeding and bruised, inside the sanctuary of the altar rails." [12]

"Send for a vet and get a bandage on the hen's leg. Next business!" said Dean Linch sarcastically.

"I apologise, me lord," said Father O'Loobera, "but I regard the act as amounting to a sacrilege an' I oany thought it right to——"

"Next business!" said the bishop, and Father O'Skeerd laughed ironically.

"Might I venture to ask your lordship if any special ceremony will be required to remove the defilement from the Dunmourne sanctuary, such as the attendance of your lordship, for let me say at wance that if such be necessary I would pay out of me own slack purse all the fees and expenses required," said Father O'Loobera.

"Nothing of the kind will be needed beyond a thorough sprinkling with blessed water, and that you can do, Father O'Loobera, as well as I could do it meself," replied the bishop gravely, while a partially-suppressed titter of laughter sounded all over the room.

"Thank your lordship," said Father O'Loobera, "but for Father Lawnavawla's advice I would not have troubled the conference with this matter."

"I contradict that flatly," said Father Lawnavawla. "I hope, my lord, you have a better opinion of me than that would amount to."

"I consulted you about it this morning," objected Father O'Loobera.

"You did right enough," said Father Lawnavawla, "but I gave you no advice whatever."

"You said you'd think the matter over, and 'twas only five minutes ago this note was passed up to me: 'Dear Maurice, bring that matter you mentioned to me before

the bishop. His lordship is very punctilious about keeping all sanctuaries pure and undefiled, but break the matter gently lest you should unnerve him by opening too suddenly.—Denis Lawnavawla.'"

"I never wrote that," cried Father Lawnavawla, white with passion.

"It was a practical joke," said the bishop, "and I take it as a bad compliment to myself that such should be attempted in any assembly presided over by me. But 'it is better to meet a bear robbed of her whelps than a fool trusting in his own folly.' Pass me that note." And the bishop took the missive which had deceived Father O'Loobera and put it into his vest pocket for further examination.

"I would like to take the opinion of the conference," said Father O'Darrell, "as to what my action ought to be in regard to the O'Brile family who are boycotted, as most of ye must be after hearing this morning at the fair, and who will, if the presaydents, or precedents set in the rest of Ireland are to be followed here, be subjected to a prolonged and vigorous course of what may be called persecution."

"If your lordship would allow me," said Father Lawnavawla, "I would allude to some matters in connection with the O'Briles which Father O'Darrell's charity will not, perhaps, suffer him to refer to. Thomas O'Brile is what is known as an independent Catholic, and his wife is the same. They attend mass regularly, they go to their duty [13] at Christmas and Easter, they pay the usual dues for the support of the clergy; but, when I have said that, I have said all of good that can be reported of them from the Church's point of view, or from the standpoint of the Faith. Mrs. O'Brile has never been known to have a mass offered up for a special intention. Her husband never consults the clergy about his secular affairs. They take advantage of all the privileges of the Church, but they practically contribute nothing beyond the ordinary dues, no donations, or special subscriptions, or pious works of any kind. Father O'Darrell, as I know, was not even once consulted by Thomas O'Brile in regard to the taking

of Mrs. Pinkerry's farm, an act which was the *fons et origo* of all O'Brile's present trouble. We have men in Gallowglass whose fervent Catholicism equals that of any section of the laity in the diocese, men like Messrs. O'Pollards, Wegless, Sawnuch, Sporeen and many others. Nay, we have estated gentlemen in Gallowglass of whom the same may be said. I allude to Mr. Benmore, the distiller, and Mr. Porterson, the brewer's agent, both exemplary and fervent Catholics to whom the local clergy may go for assistance in cases of secret poverty which come under their notice and where the names of the afflicted parties cannot be divulged. But the O'Briles do not belong to this category. They are a stiff-necked people, though, of course, they are very nice and very civil and all to that, and do nothing wrong. Still the fact remains that, though industrious and prosperous, they are not useful to the Church. They are not free to give. It is 'not that I seek the gift,' as Saint Paul says, 'but I seek the fruit that may abound' to the account of the giver.[14] (Applause). Therefore I have stated this much to ye, me lord, right reverend, very reverend and reverend Fathers, so that ye may be better able to appreciate the position of the clergy of Gallowglass in this delicate affair."

"There is nothing before us in reference to this matter on which we could ground any definite action whatsoever," said Doctor O'Keefe, "I move that, while thanking the Gallowglass priests for bringing the matter before our notice, we simply pass on to the next business."

"There is no other business," said the bishop, "except to pass a strong resolution calling for a grant from the Government for our new Teachers' Training College." And all rose to their feet with one accord and began to scramble for coats and umbrellas, while the resolution was being proposed, seconded and unanimously carried.

"Dinner at five thirty o'clock at the Parochial House," called out Father O'Darrell. "All heartily welcome!"

While the meeting was still struggling for its overcoats, Doctor O'Keefe arose and read out a long resolution in favour of a Catholic University, which Father O'Darrell seconded, and which the bishop declared carried unani-

mously. And on the following day all the Irish newspapers, and many of the English journals, informed the world of the fact that the priests of Kilmoy had met at Gallowglass to discuss the "University question," and had passed a resolution demanding "in the name of Christian toleration the immediate endowment of a University the constitution of which would meet the approval of the hierarchy, who are the supreme authority in such matters, and confer on Irish Catholics the inestimable privilege of higher education which has long been most cruelly and unjustly denied to them."

We cannot dwell upon the proceedings at dinner. Towards the close of the banquet, when most of the Pommery had been consumed and the company were refreshing themselves on whisky-punch, Hugh O'Dowla arrived from Ballygrauver in Father O'Darrell's car, which had been despatched for his conveyance. Tired and hungry, but not so prostrate as when he had last visited the Parochial House, for he now had a career open before him and all his pressing troubles were ended, Hugh followed Father O'Darrell into the dining-room and knelt down to kiss the bishop's ring and receive the episcopal blessing. The young man's head reeled when he arose and surveyed the flushed and bloated company seated at the tables.

The priests stared at him, just as a herd of cows stare in amazement at a newly-born calf. And Hugh stared at the priests, for never before had he witnessed such a Gargantuan banquet, or such a gluttonous and repulsive array of banqueters.[15]

"That's one o' the best-looking boys I ever saw in my life!" said Father Flauhool; "I can trace Monsignor Penser's expression in every feature."

"What business has he here?" said Father O'Skeerd cynically.

"Just as much if not more business than yerself," said Father Lawnavawla, taking up the cudgels against Father O'Darrell's opponent.

O'Skeerd's face grew purple: "The boy has no business here. 'Tis no place for him."

"Is it the way you want to cast aspersions on the bishop

and the vicar-general ? " said Father Lawnavawla, who was moving about amongst the company urging them to adjourn to the drawing-room which opened upon the gardens. A general uprising took place, and soon Hugh was left alone with the bishop and the pastor, after he had undergone a most embarrassing scrutiny from the outgoing priests. The air felt clearer when they had gone, but the litter which they left behind them on the table and carpet was offensive to the keen senses of the youth. The bishop questioned him ; Father O'Darrell petted him ; and Bessie the Priest brought in a special dinner which had been kept for him. Food and good wine restored his courage, for youth quickly responds to the stimulus of refreshment.

" Lave ye come out onder the cedars an' the stars ! " he heard Father Lawnavawla saying to the company in the drawing-room, whence came the sounds of match-striking and the aroma of cigars ; and most of the priests followed the curate into the moonlit garden.

When Hugh had finished his repast, the bishop having gone upstairs to the study, Father O'Darrell said, " And now, me son, you're feeling better. We'll start for Kilmoy in a few minutes. His lordship is gone up to say his prayers. Would you like to call in at your father's house in passing ? "

" No, sir," said Hugh tremulously, his head hot with wine. He had no desire to see anyone under the parental roof, neither his father, nor his mother, nor his sister.

Soon afterwards the company dispersed, emerging from the gates of the Parochial House like a flock of giant crows, and they found the road blocked up with their own cars, which had been long awaiting their appearance. There was much shouting and hand-shaking, and the gait of many a divine was like that of a sailor in a gale of wind ; but, at length, they got away safely in jingle, side-car, trap, phæton and wagonette, in charge of their well-seasoned drivers.

Then two covered cars with blinds drawn closely, one following the other, drove up through the Main Street of Gallowglass.

"That's the bishop, what?" said O'Pollards.

"Yes, an' if I turned around an' said there's the pasthur I wouldn't be far out naythe r," said Sporeen.

"That's his car, case in point," said Sawnuch.

"Lave ye be aisy now," said M'Climber, "'tis eight o'clock. Where can our Parish Priest be going to at this hour?"

"Ask us an aisy question," said Roland Glenpower. "I must be off to get a cup o' tea at John O'Dowla's. Good night, gentlemen."

[1] The words in quotation marks in this connection are taken from 1 Timothy iii. 1–5.

[2] A two-wheeled covered car, the reverse of a hansom, inasmuch as the opening for passengers is at the back and the driver sits in front.

[3] *Reminiscences of Sir Francis Burnand* (Methuen & Co., London).

[4] Compare, *inter alia*, a paper read on this subject at the Maynooth Union in June 1904, by Dr. Kelly, Bishop of Ross.

[5] A presbytery is a house in which several priests live together.

[6] The parochial house is the residence of the parish priest alone.

[7] "Swaddler" and "Souper" are the most opprobrious and frequently-used terms applied by the priests to the Protestants. They had their origin in the practice of Protestants giving baby-clothes and soup to the poor Catholics in by-gone years.

[8] The Author well remembers hearing a sermon on penny-readings, almost in the exact words used in the text.

[9] Irish word for nonsense.

[10] Proverbs xviii. 22, Authorised Version.

[11] Same verse, Douay Version.

[12] The Author remembers listening to an indignant and lengthy sermon upon an incident identical with that mentioned in the text.

[13] Go to confession and receive communion. The punishment for neglecting to communicate at Easter is excommunication and exclusion from Christian burial, entailing eternal damnation.

[14] Philippians iv. 17, Douay Version.

[15] The well-to-do Irish were always remarkable for their love of high-class wines; and the priests, when they became rich, only followed in the wake of the landed gentry of the eighteenth century. Lord Chesterfield, who was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in 1745, says that "nine gentlemen in ten in Ireland are impoverished by the great quantity of claret which, from mistaken motives of hospitality and dignity, they think it necessary should be drunk in their houses." He adds that, "except in providing that their claret should be two or three years old, the Irish gentry thought less of two or three years hence than any people under the sun." Another writer, quoted by Lecky, says, "Would not a Frenchman give a shrug at finding in every little inn Bordeaux claret and Nantz brandy, though in all likelihood not a morsel of Irish bread?" Hist. Ir. xviiith Cent., Vol. I, p. 287.

CHAPTER XXVI

"The lotus grows not on the mountain top,
Asses refuse to bear a horse's burden,
He who sows barley reaps not fields of rice;
Do what you will, a woman will be a woman."
—From the Sanskrit, by Sir M. Monier-Williams.

"Divil be from me!" exclaimed Roland Glenpower, dashing into O'Dowla's soon afterwards; "'tis after eight o'clock, an' though I left home at seven o'clock this morning, I'm not after doing what I came to Gallowglass for yet."

"I didn't see you selling anything at the fair?" said John O'Dowla.

"Damn good raisin why," replied Roland. "I had nauthing to sell. Get me a cup o' tea, Bridget O'Dowla; I'm talking all day, no sooner out o' wan subject than red-hot into another. 'Tis the divil to be a master o' hounds, no sooner out o' wan company than I'm into another. 'You must have a treat, Mr. Glenpower!' with wan: 'Tis an age since I saw you!' with another: 'How is the mare I sold you?' with a third: 'An' how is the pup I reared for you?' with a fourth: an' 'What about the price o' thim turkeys the fox took?' with a fifth party, an' so on, so forth. I'm extremely courteous to everybody for policy sake. D'ye see, John?"

"Oh, I see, very shrewd, very shrewd!" said John O'Dowla.

"But to make a long story short," went on Roland—"Steady! I'm at fault. Where was I? Oh yes, I have it! 'Tis what I was saying is, that the business that brought me to Gallowglass in post-haste this morning isn't done yet."

"What was it?" asked Mrs. O'Dowla. "I'm after givin' orders to have tea wetted an' eggs put down to boil."

"Begor, we're going to have an increase in our family, and I was told to come down for the doctor as quick as ever I could, an' so I did, but I didn't go to him yet. I was makin' bargains, splittin' differences, and so forth, between sellers an' buyers o' horses, an' even vetting horses, in an onofficial way, all the morning; an' I forgot all about it till while ago. I called at the doctor's house then, an' he was out; but as soon as he returns I'll bring him to Glenpowerstown with me by main force."

"How many have you now?—God bless 'em all!" said John O'Dowla, who knew the number of young Glenpowers more accurately than Roland himself.

"Begor, I couldn't tell you if you ask me sudden like that. But I think this'll be the seventh," replied Roland, cutting some bread for himself and copiously buttering it.

"You won't stop till you have a baker's dozen," said John O'Dowla.

"Roland, you're abominable!" exclaimed Julia. "I pity Mrs. Glenpower sincerely!"

"Sh! Julia," retorted Glenpower, "you don't understand these things yet. Wait till you have twins of your own a couple o' times first, and then you'll be entitled to speak on these matters. John, am I right? Mrs. O'Dowla, what is it but nature?"

"Nature an' the will o' God, Roland," said Mrs. O'Dowla. "I'll be unaisy till I hear how she is, but 'twill be all right with God's help, and then I'll call up to see her. If I was a quality lady I'd leave me card with congratulations."

"Congratulations!" exclaimed John O'Dowla. "Is it to a man having the seventh child? 'Tis with sincerest condolence you should leave it, I think. Pup, pup, pup!"

Roland, who was not destitute of a certain species of tact, was deaf to John O'Dowla's remark. "Everything is the will o' God, as Mrs. O'Dowla says," said Roland, "but, as ye know, I'm a great naturalist, an' I'm all for leaving everything to nature. There's a young mare o' mine with a sore on her quarter for the last eighteen months that 'ud frighten ye to look at, an' everywan says, 'Take her to Swearman the vet'; 'Do this

and do that,' an' so on, but I just listens to 'em an' I leaves it to nature. I'm breast-high for leaving things to nature; an' if this young lady here was a little more natural in herself, an' would let a body tickle her under the arms, or give her a squeeze to circulate the blood to the extremities off an' on——"

"Roland," said Julia, interrupting him, "I notice that men like you, who never cease talking about women as if they were animals to be admired for their appearance only, have no respect for them, and show them no kindness. It is no wonder I should be disgusted with men."

Roland winced, and John O'Dowla abruptly stopped laughing.

"There's Lar Flauhool in the shop, an' I wonder at it, for he's no customer of ours," said Mrs. O'Dowla.

Roland stood up, saying, "'Tis me he wants. I'm buying a colt from him, an' there's ten pounds between us. Come in, Lar."

"God save all here!" said the great farmer stalking into the room with his hat on.

"Sig, sig, sig sheesh!" cried John O'Dowla. "Caed mille failthe!"[1]

"'Tis promisin' to be a fine night, thanks be to God!" said Lar Flauhool bashfully. "I begs pardon for intrudin' on ye."

"For what?" cried Roland, looking very much surprised. "Are y' after taking a liberty with Mrs. O'Dowla that we're not aware of? Mrs. O'Dowla, is there anything between yerself and Mister Flauhool?"

"Ho, ho, ho!" roared Flauhool, taking off his hat. "You musht always be play-acting, Roland Glenpower; I'm dead from you."

"How are they with ye this year, Mr. Flauhool?" asked John O'Dowla seriously.

"Why, thin, they're not to say over good, but they might be worse. A body 'ud be very full after a male of 'em, but they's no substance in 'em any more'n a couple o' puffs o' wind, an' you'd be as slack as ever again. They're not over thick, but, af they're not, they're a fair size, a fair size, thanks be to God!" replied the farmer.

"Well, sure, an' isn't it well to have that same to say? glory be to God!" said John O'Dowla.

At this time of year the potato crop was a most serious topic of conversation, and the potatoes were always referred to as "they."

"Is that young man outside in the shop your son, sir?" asked Mrs. O'Dowla.

"Why, then, he is, ma'am," replied Flauhool bashfully.

"Come in, young man!" exclaimed John O'Dowla, catching young Flauhool, who was several inches over six feet high, and dragging him into the parlour.

"He's a damn good cut, Lar!" said Roland. "Have ye any more of 'em?"

"This is th' eldest boy, an' we has two more boys! God bless 'em!" replied Flauhool. "An' sure the world knows I has enough o' girls!"

"Good!" exclaimed Glenpower. "I'd be sorry to see this side o' the country without the Flauhool breed. How old is he?"

"Begor, you put a question to me! If his mother was to the fore she'd tell you better than me, but I think I'm not far out when I says he's twinty wan or thereabouts."

"He's the makings of a rattling man! What's yer name, boy? What need you be so shy?" said Roland, turning to the enormous youth who was blushing and looking down at his own boots, and who had not yet begun to shave, a soft fair down covering his jaws and chin while his upper lip showed scarcely a trace of hair.

"You're very rude," continued Roland, as the young man made no reply "Are y' ashamed o' yer name?"

"Yerra, sure, you knows me name very well, sir, 'tis Patsey Flauhool, lay me 'lone!" said the young man sheepishly.

"We christened him the Sunday before Ainuch-a-dip, an' we called him after me brother, Father Pat, the parish priest o' Neenawhoona," said his father in explanation.

"Lift up yer head, sir," cried Roland, crossing the room

and catching up the young man's head between his hands. "Do you see anything over there?"

"No, sir," replied young Flauhool, staring at the open cupboard.

Roland turned the young man's head round slowly until his eyes were directly facing Julia.

"Now, sir, do you see anything?"

"I do, sir."

"Spell transmanfignimicanbandanduality!" exclaimed Roland.

"Yerra I couldn't, sir," replied the young man. "Lay me go!"

"Do you see Miss O'Dowla?"

"I do, sir."

"Did you ever see as fine a cut of a young lady in your life? On your oath, sir?"

Julia got up from the table, blushing crimson. "Let me out, Roland!" she said. "You have trifled with me once too often.

She crossed the room towards the door, but Roland intercepted and seized her in his arms. "Let us make a match this minute!" he cried, amidst general laughter.

Julia screamed and, wrenching herself from Roland's grasp, after a hot struggle, rushed out of the room.

When she had disappeared, the incident was forgotten, and the conversation in the parlour drifted on to other subjects; for to them it seemed that Julia had acted only with becoming modesty in running away. The general opinion of Gallowglass people, like Roland Glenpower, Lar Flauhool, and John O'Dowla, was that girls liked to be squeezed, pinched, tickled and bantered in the presence of company, all assertions to the contrary being regarded merely as a maidenly tribute to the proprieties.

"She's a bit dry in herself, but she's soft an' young!" said Lar Flauhool. "The makings of a fine slochter woman, God bless her!"

Whisky was then produced, and in the business of bargaining and grog-drinking Julia was forgotten. But the

incident was destined to have graver consequences than they imagined.

Julia had rushed up to her bedroom, thrown herself on the bed, and for a time cried convulsively; and, when at length she sat up, she was still trembling with indignation and excitement in every nerve and muscle.

"I'll never be insulted in this house again!" she said. "There is nothing in the world to induce me to remain in it. There are but two ways of life open to me outside the convent, either the life of an old maid or marriage. An old maid I will never be, and if marriage is to be an alliance for life with a clod like young Flauhool, or a jester like Roland Glenpower, the sooner I put it out of the question the better!"

She put on her hat, gloves and coat; and, taking her large *Key to Heaven* in her hand, went downstairs. As she passed out through the shop, she heard them still talking and laughing in the parlour.

It was dark, and, as usual on Fair nights, the street was full of drunken men. Fighting and cursing were rife all over the town, but especially opposite the doors of the public-houses, where the publicans were forcibly ejecting the men who had spent all their money in getting drunk on the premises. The police were arresting the noisiest of the drunkards. and taking them handcuffed by main force to the barrack. It was only the very noisy and defiant who were thus arrested, as the lock-up could not contain more than a dozen prisoners at most. No matter how drunk the men might be, the police would not arrest them on a Fair day, if they were at all peaceably behaved; except, perhaps, in cases where farmers, with large sums of money in their possession, became insensible from drink on the roads, and had to be taken into custody to save them from being robbed or run over.

The hungry horses, mules and asses, and, above all, the mares, with bursting dugs, whose late foals were waiting for them at home, were neighing wildly at the shop doors as if appealing to their inebriated masters to come home. The drunkards' wives stood on the kerbstones, holding the reins, and calling to their husbands to come out of the

public-houses. The air was heavy with the smell of porter and whisky. Drunken choruses resounded from the tap-rooms :—

"O, ho, love is the sowl av a nate Irish man ;
He loves all that is lovely, loves all that he can,
Wid his shprig o' shillelagh an' shamrogue so green
His heart is good-humoured, 'tis honest an' sound,
No invy, no malice is there to be found ;
He courts an' he marries, he dhrinks an' he fights,
For love, all for love, fur in that he delights,
Wid his shprig o' shillelagh an' shamrogue so green !

"Had yez ever the look to see Dawnybrook Fair ?
An Irishman, all in his gloorey, is there,
Wid his shprig o' shillelagh an' shamrogue so green !
He meets wid his Sheelah, who, blushing a smile,
Cries, 'Get ye gone, Pat,' yet consints all the while.
To the Priest thin they goes ; an' nine munths after that,
A fine baby cries out, 'How d'ye do, Father Pat,
Wid yer shprig o' shillelagh an' shamrogue so green ?'"[2]

. . . . . .

"Oh, the biys av Kilkinny are shtout rovin' blades,
An' af ever they meet wid the nice little maids,
They'll kiss 'em, an' coax 'em, an' shpind their munny free,
Of all the towns in Ireland Kilkinny for me !"[3]

. . . . . .

"Standing firm and strong,
In dauntless combination,
We'll have our lands ere long
At the poor law valuation !
That's the word to say,
Down with confiscation,
Not a cent we'll pay
But Griffith's valuation !"[4]

. . . . .

"Immortal an' divine,
Great Bacchus, god of wine,
Create me by adoption your son ;
In hopes that you'll comply
An' my glass'll ne'er run dry,
Nor my charmin' little cruishkeen lawn.
Gra ma chree, ma cruishkeen !
Slantha gyal mavoureen
Gra ma chree, ma cruishkeen lawn !"[5]

"Beauing, belle-ing, dancing, drinking,
Breaking windows, damning, sinking,
Ever raking, never thinking,
Lives the Rakes o' Mallow!

"Tallow, Mallow, Cappoquin,
Doneraile an' Charleville,
Broken windows up the town,
Hi for the Rakes o' Mallow!"[6]

To Julia, in her present frame of mind, such a scene, though by no means unfamiliar, was especially revolting, and confirmed her in her resolution to leave the world for ever and prepare for eternity in time. She belonged to a Total Abstinence Sodality, and she now thought of the verses from Proverbs which were printed in the Appendix to the book of rules: "Who hath woe? Whose father hath woe? Who hath contentions? Who falls into pits? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? Surely they that pass their time in wine, and study to drink off their cups. Look not upon the wine when it is yellow, when the colour thereof shineth in the glass: it goeth in pleasantly. But in the end it will bite like a snake and will spread abroad poison like a basilisk."

The only fault she had ever dared to find with Father O'Darrell and the Gallowglass curates was that she had never heard those verses read from the pulpit, or earnestly expounded to the congregation.

She walked quickly along the Main Street, then up the Chapel Road, frequently compelled to leave the footpath to elude the drunkards, and at length she reached the Convent Gate in a condition of complete nervous prostration. She rang the bell; and when the lodge-woman, whom she knew so well, opened the door for her, Julia felt that at last she had come to her true home. How peaceful it was within the convent gate!

"I want to see our Mother!" said Julia.

"Yes, miss! They're at recreation. I'll tell her you're here!" replied the gatewoman, as she led the way along the conservatory corridor, where the air was laden with perfume, until they reached the visitors' parlour, and then the woman lit the gas and Julia was left alone.

Every object in the room was familiar to her. Many and many a time had she sat there. Well she knew its beeswaxed floor and plain mahogany furniture. Well she knew every print and picture on the walls, and well she knew the scapulars, beads and medals hanging for sale in the open glass closet, with the printed superscription "For the benefit of the poor." How restful it seemed after the angry discord of the street!

A faint smell of incense pervaded the place, everything around reminded her of her girlhood, and her heart beat wildly with emotion when she reflected that she was now going to take up her abode for ever within these happy walls. At length the pattering of feet along the corridor was heard, and soon the parlour door burst open and the Reverend Mother rushed in to welcome her child like the father in the parable. How fresh her face looked in its white halo of coif and *guimpe* under the black veil thrown back over her shoulders like a shawl.

She embraced Julia, kissing her on both cheeks. "My child! my child!" she cried. "I have an inspiration! You're going to stay. I know you are. Our Mother of the Angels told me so!"

Julia sobbed her assent, while she rested in Mother Ligouri's arms with a confidence which she had never reposed in her own mother.

"I knew our Blessed Lady would do it in her own good time!" said the Reverend Mother, when Julia had related the occurrence which precipitated her decision to leave the world. "I'll call Mother Loyola, child! We'll take these clothes off you at once. Come into the Chapel of the Sacred Heart and say a prayer to the adorable Heart of Jesus!"

Still leaning on the nun's arm which encircled her waist, the pensive girl was conducted by Mother Ligouri through a long corridor to the retreat known as the Chapel of the Sacred Heart, a sanctuary which was little more than a recess in the corridor, with room for two persons to pray in. They entered and each knelt on a *prie-dieu* before the altar. Leaving Julia, after an interval, the Reverend Mother went up to the community room

to acquaint the sisters with Julia's arrival and to bring down Mother Loyola, the Mother of Novices.

Julia looked up at the altar bright with real and artificial flowers and gleaming brass candelabra, in which were lighted wax candles. In the centre was an image of the Saviour's heart and a statue of the Redeemer himself before which flickered a perpetual lamp of ruby glass filled with colza oil on the surface of which a cork float buoyed up the lighting wick. And on the ledge of the altar were three admirable orchids, a *Vanda* and two *Cattleyas*. A velvet pile carpet covered the little floor on which stood two flower-stands containing asters and dahlias. Before the altar on the left-hand side was a life-size statue of Blessed Margaret Mary in nun's costume, its entranced face lifted up towards the Sacred Heart and its hands joined in fervent prayer.

The atmosphere was laden with perfume and, to Julia's mind, all her surroundings realised the pictures of heaven which she had been accustumed to dwell upon in imagination since childhood. She did not pray, but she experienced a feeling of restfulness which was in itself happiness.

"Here I shall at least be safe from the boorishness of men!" was the thought uppermost in her mind.

The Reverend Mother again glided into the little chapel and tapped Julia gently on the shoulder. Julia arose and went out into the corridor, where she met Mother Loyola, who embraced her, kissing her on both cheeks.

"I'm so glad you're come at last, Julia! Come upstairs, my child!" said the little nun, trembling with excitement and pleasure.

The three went up the shining stairs and reached the landing in front of the community room where stood the open glass case full of relics before which burned perpetually a ruby lamp, its gleams illuminating a silver monstrance which, as Julia knew, held a different relic every day in the year. The door of the community room was ajar and Julia could hear the rustling of the sisters inside who were in a condition of intense excitement caused by so unwonted an occurrence. The trio passed

the door without looking in and entered upon the long corridor off which the cells opened, like the bedrooms in a great hotel. Over the door of each cell was printed the name of a saint and at frequent intervals cards bearing the inscription, "My vows are my life," hung upon the walls and woodwork. How spotlessly fresh and peaceful it all seemed to Julia!

At length the party paused at a cell, over the door of which was printed "St. John of God," and entered. It was a small bedroom, with shining beeswaxed floor, and lighted by one window which looked on to the public road and commanded an extensive view of the country beyond, as Julia was aware. It contained a plain, wooden, four-posted bedstead with tester, curtains and valance of washable grey blue check, and a bedspread of the same material. The wood of the bed was beeswaxed like the floor and as highly polished. A washstand, a chair, a hook for clothes and a small corner press constituted the furniture. On the wall hung a text from scripture and over the door was printed the legend, "My vows are my life."

"I have got a special bonnet for you from Dublin," said Mother Loyola, "but it is not covered yet. Here is the postulant's cap." The Mother of Novices handed Julia a frilled, black muslin cap of the same shape as the white caps worn by elderly farmers' and labourers' wives, entirely covering the hair and ears.

"Cut off my hair, Mother!" said Julia.

"Oh, my love, that's never done till you're received!"

"I want it done, Mother, I want to bind myself to God and to cut off all connection with the world. I want to mark this night by some sacrifice!"

There is nothing new under the sun; and, spontaneous as Julia's action was, she was but following unconsciously the example of Greek girls who lived two thousand years ago. "Girls also cut and dedicated their hair to Athena in Argos; and, at Delos, lads and lasses both shore it in honour of the Hyperborean Maidens." [7] Julia was about to adopt the mystic Christ, as she knew him, for her everlasting spouse; and the Irish girl now made a

votive offering of her beautiful hair just as some Greek maiden might have dedicated it to Cybele "with a prayer for a happy marriage." Or, perhaps, she shore off her tresses in the same spirit which animated St. Paul when he sailed away from Corinth, "having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow." [8]

The nuns held a whispered consultation and they decided to gratify Julia's whim. "Sit down," said the Reverend Mother, "till I cut off your hair in the name of God." And she produced a large scissors, being determined to secure so eligible an addition to their community, and having long had Father O'Darrell's personal guarantee for the payment of Julia's fortune, which would be considerable.

Julia sat down on the chair, and the shears did its work rudely but well. Down fell the fair locks into the check apron which the Mother of Novices held to receive them. Julia's eyes were filled with tears and her heart beat with nervous irregularity. It was well that there was no mirror in the little cell, for if Julia had seen herself notched and shorn, as she was when she arose, she would probably have fainted. The Mother of Novices then put on the old-fashioned frilled cap, with its broad black band behind the frill, and tied the wide black strings into a bow under Julia's chin.

"Your own dress will do, as it isn't coloured, until your mother sends your trousseau, but put this little shawl over your shoulders," said Mother Ligouri.

A small black shawl with a fringe of its own material was put over Julia's shoulders and fastened at her throat with a black safety pin. Her hat, her watch and chain, her brooch, her gloves, her coat, were bundled into a large calico bag, and the Reverend Mother carried them to her own cell, which was next to Julia's.

"Now," said Mother Loyola, "we are ready!"

"Let us pray to our Blessed Lady!" said the Reverend Mother. The three knelt down by the bed, Julia in the centre, and recited aloud the "Hail, Holy Queen," and "St Bernard's Prayer to the Virgin."

Then they arose, and went down again to the landing

where the relics were, and, as there were no mirrors in the convent, Julia had no conception of the alteration in her appearance. At the request of the Reverend Mother, she kissed the relic in the monstrance, which that day happened to be a drop of the blood of St. Paul of the Cross.[9]

"Sisters, welcome our new postulant!" said the Reverend Mother, leading Julia by the hand into the large community room, where the nuns were recreating themselves before retiring to bed. They were sitting at separate tables, about twenty-five in number, some reading, some working with their needles, others writing, others talking. They all rose with one accord, laughing nervously, and surrounded Julia. Every nun present in succession kissed her on both cheeks and shook her hands. The incident of Julia's arrival had given rise to the greatest excitement, it being an unprecedented occurrence within the memory of the Sisters that a postulant should come in this way at nine o'clock at night. The hilarity of the fresh-faced nuns, their interminable laughter, their silly jests, their infantile topics of conversation, diverted Julia's thoughts from her own troubles, and she soon found herself speaking to them as pleasantly as if she had been paying a visit in her customary way.

"Nell Sawnuch is going to become a postulant!" said Mother Loyola.

"Indeed!" exclaimed Julia. "When I used to sleep next to her in the dormitory at the Mortification I had an awful time of it. She used to snore dreadfully. The very instant she got into bed the dormitory would re-echo with her snores. The other children used to call out to me and ask me to put a pillow over her face or stick a handkerchief in her mouth. I used to be dead tired from getting up to stop her, and when I was so tired that I couldn't get up any more the children used to scream at me from all parts, 'Julia O'Dowla, you're awfully selfish. Can't you stop her, for goodness' sake?' and so on!"

"And Bernadette Wegless is going to be married!" said the Reverend Mother, glad to see Julia becoming so self-forgetful.

" Bernadette used to stick pins in the floor every night all round her bed," said Julia, " to keep away the ghosts, so that if the ghosts came they would walk on the pins and have to scream out. Several of the girls walked on the pins and cut their feet ! "

The nuns laughed heartily, and Julia felt her spirits rising.

" Girls are very queer ! " said the Reverend Mother with a little evanescent sigh. " Poor Bernadette, she was born at Lourdes ; found under a rose bush, she used to say herself ! "

" Those two girls were queer," said Julia, " and so was Letty Sporeen. Many the time Letty, who slept at the other side of me, would jump out of bed and cry ' Julia, Julia, there's a fly in my cell.' And for half-an-hour there would be the greatest commotion until that fly was caught ; or ' Julia, there's a mouse in the dormitory ; ' or ' Julia, my jar is burst, the cork is out.' She often came into my cell and stayed till morning because she had seen a midge or a mosquito in her own ! "

When some time had been spent thus in conversation, a nun called Sister Bernard took out her watch.

" Time flies and death approaches, Sisters," she said. " I must ring the bell, 'tis half-past nine ! "

" Oh, Sister, you're bell-ringer this week ! " said the Reverend Mother.

Then, prayers over, Julia was kissed again on both cheeks by all the nuns and was escorted to her cell by the Mother of Novices.

" Good night, child ! May holy St. John of God watch over your slumbers. I had better put you down for second call in the morning, half-past seven. First call is at six, and that would be too early for you." She kissed Julia on both cheeks and closed the door.

An oblong card was hanging by a tape from the handle of the door on the outside, with the words " First Call " printed on the front, and " Second Call " printed on the back. The Reverend Mother turned the words " Second Call " outwards and went into her own cell which was next to Julia's. The cell of St. John of God being that in

JULIA O'DOWLA FINDS REFUGE IN THE CONVENT

"Bernadette used to stick pins in the floor every night around her bed," said Julia, "to keep away the ghosts, so that if the ghosts came they would walk on the pins and have to scream out."—P. [illegible].

which postulants spent their first night, was situated between the Reverend Mother's on one side and the Mother of Novices on the other.

As Julia lay awake, with the check curtains drawn close all round the four sides of the bed, she heard the town clock striking ten, for the wind was from the north-west ; and she imagined she could see her father closing the shop door, and hear him saying, as he put up the wooden bar :—

> " ' To bed, to bed,' says Sleepy Head ;
> ' Time enough,' says Slow ;
> ' Put down the kettle,' says Greedy Guts,
> ' An' we'll sup before we go ! ' "

The remembrance made her cry, and for an hour she lay sobbing restlessly on her pillow. Then she heard the town clock tolling eleven, and in five minutes afterwards heard the old town watchman's well-known voice crying, " 'Layvin o'clock, fine night ! All's well ! "

She was overpowered by her feelings when she realised that she would never again walk the familiar street of Gallowglass, never see her father's house, never go to mass in the parish chapel on a Sunday, never see the Gallowglass people in their new clothes, never again be mistress of her own actions, never again step outside the high convent walls, for she was now a member of an Enclosed Order.

She had not wept for several years until that day, but her tears fell fast now on the snow-white pillow, in the awful stillness of her first night in the convent as a postulant.

As it frequently happened that Julia spent the evening reading in her room, and retired to bed without saying good-night to the rest of the family, her absence was not noticed. There was much to be done in the shop after Glenpower and Flauhool had departed. The O'Dowlas had had a good day, both in the shop and at the fair, and the reckoning of the moneys, the making up of the books and the comparing of notes with the shopmen, took a considerable time. At length everything had been attended to, the clerks, apprentice, and servant had gone to bed, and " the master " went into the parlour to take " his

own" glass of punch before retiring. It was past eleven o'clock, and Mrs. O'Dowla, having mixed the punch in a large tumbler, took a wineglass of it as her proper *peculium*.

"Slawntha!" said she, taking a sip.

"Good health, ma'am!" said John O'Dowla, making a wry face as he laid the tumbler on the table.

Thus they sat for a while and drank in silence before the fire.

"Glory be to God for all his gifts an' graces!" said John O'Dowla. "Pup, pup-pup, pup-poo!"

"Amen, a heerna!" whispered his wife with a sigh. "God be merciful to poor Aunt Hannah!" Then she rose and said: "I'll go up and be getting through some o' me prayers while you're finishing that. Let you rake out the fire."

"God be with poor Hugh!" said John O'Dowla sadly. "The living needs remembrance no less than the dead."

Mrs. O'Dowla sighed, and lit her candle and waddled off as became a woman of her age and dimensions. Having reached the top of the stairs after much labour, she looked around the landing, as was her custom every night. To her astonishment Julia's door was open.

"Is Jule going to die that she left her door open?" said Mrs. O'Dowla aloud.

Rejoicing at the pretext for looking into her daughter's bedroom, the interior of which she had not seen for weeks, she went silently across and peeped in at the door. When she beheld the room untenanted, her first conviction was that her eyes deceived her. She walked in, felt the bed with her hands, looked all round, under the bed, under the clothes that were hanging on the door, and under the dressing-table, tearing the holland covering off Julia's accumulated story papers.

"Blessed Lady of Mount Carmel!" she exclaimed, "Julia isn't here."

Then she went into the drawing-room, for Julia occasionally sat there reading at night, but the room was dark and unoccupied. Mrs. O'Dowla was speechless in her amazement for a time; but, as if awaking from a dream, she ran

out on the landing and screamed frantically at the top of her voice, her cries resounding through the silent house. John O'Dowla, who had been sipping his punch, tapping the table, and staring at the cornice, as was his custom when wrapped up in his own thoughts, sprang to his feet, and, kicking off his loose, well-worn slippers, ran up the stairs in his stocking vamps.

"Is the house afire, Bridget?" he cried.

"Oh, Jule, Jule, Jule, alannuv! me darling Jule! Ahoo, ahoo, oo-oo, oo-oo!" wailed Mrs. O'Dowla, clapping her hands.

"Jule?" exclaimed John O'Dowla, stricken with amazement.

"Oh, Jule a petteen, a lanna, petteen, petteen, me darling child! where are you, where are you at all, at all, at all? Come back to your mother, aweenuch, a gra gal! Ahoo, ahoo, oo-oo, oo-oo!" cried Mrs. O'Dowla.

Rushing past his wife John burst into his daughter's bedroom. He searched high and he searched low as his wife had done before him. Then he went into the drawing-room and searched there likewise, while Mrs. O'Dowla cried aloud and clapped her hands, sitting on the first step of the flight of stairs that led up to the second storey.

"She's gone!" roared John O'Dowla, stamping his foot. Tears were in his eyes and rolling down his face; but he fretted and fumed about to prevent himself from giving way, tossing the chairs about the room, dragging the tables hither and thither, knocking all things topsy-turvey.

"Well, you may bawl now, Bridget! You have raisin at last! Well may you bawl, an' bawl, and bawl till doomsday!" he said—in a quavering voice: "Our good child is gone from us, an' I'd as lief to die! Where are they all, the sleepy-skulls? Hugh! Hugh! Ah, sure, I forgot!" he said in a quavering voice; but, bracing himself up, he cried out: "Main! Mick! Jerry! Come down! Stir yeerselves!"

"Ahoo, me Jule, a petteen, a lanna, me darling Jule, come back to your own poor mother, come back, come

back, ochone! ochone!" cried Mrs. O'Dowla, with tears streaming down her broad cheeks into her lap.

Quickly the house was aroused, and all were standing in a little crowd on the landing before Julia's open door. The shopman told how he had seen her go out with her prayer-book in the evening. John O'Dowla then recalled how she had left the room indignant with Roland Glenpower, adding: "That same joker'll never enter my door again. I may forgive, but I'll never forget!"

The clerk suggested that she had gone to the convent, and, as it was so late, had been kept for the night by the nuns. He felt sure she would be home for breakfast in the morning.

"You may be right. Let us go up an' see!" said John O'Dowla. "What would I do without her at all? She is dearer to me than all I ever earned or ever could earn!"

John O'Dowla and his clerk hurried up to the convent lodge and awakened the lodge-woman, who partially eased the father's anxiety by assuring him that Julia was in the convent. At that moment Julia was crying in her cell, and little knew that her father was at the gate inquiring after her. She imagined they would not be sorry for her departure at home; but, had she known how much they missed her, she would never have left them. Had she witnessed the scenes of grief in the home of the O'Dowlas that night, her nature would have been entirely won to pity and love for her kindred. Neither her father nor her mother made pretence of going to sleep. She was gone from them! They sat in her bedroom most of the time, John staring blankly at the ceiling with dry eyes opened to their extremest verge, Mrs. O'Dowla crying as if she had determined that shedding tears was to be the business of her life henceforth.

"I'll never consent to have her enter that convent!" said John O'Dowla with great solemnity, wiping his eyes as he spoke.

"God's holy will be done!" said Mrs. O'Dowla, taking out her great rosary beads.

Then she knelt by the bedside and said many rosaries

until her tears were dried, and the dawn was giving warning of its approach through the eastern window which lighted the bedroom that had been Julia's, since the first night, now many years ago, that she had abandoned the cot by her mother's bedside.

[1] A hundred thousand welcomes.

[2] Brogue version of an interesting national song by Edward Lysaght (1763–1810), one of the most popular ballads in Ireland.

[3] A popular Irish song by an unknown writer.

[4] *Land League Lays*, by T. D. Sullivan.

[5] The Cruishkeen Lawn, or Lovely Jug of Drink. A most popular song.

[6] One of the best known Irish popular songs and airs.

[7] *Greek Votive Offerings*, by W. H. D. Rouse (Cambridge, 1902).

[8] Acts xviii. 18.

[9] The Author remembers wearing on his watch-chain for a considerable time a heart-shaped trinket, alleged to contain a drop of the blood of St. Paul of the Cross, which was given to him by a regular priest.

CHAPTER XXVII

"As a beam o'er the face of the waters may glow,
While the tide runs in darkness and coldness below,
So the cheek may be tinged with a warm, sunny smile,
Though the cold heart to ruin runs darkly the while."—MOORE.

SOME months had 'elapsed after the occurrences narrated in the preceding chapters, and the O'Dowlas were gradually resigning themselves to the absence of Julia and Hugh. The father was beginning unconsciously to centre all his aspirations on his eldest son, Ignatius, who would probably settle in Gallowglass, get married, and have children in whom the old couple might see their own youthful days re-enacted before their eyes. They received congratulations from all quarters upon the good fortune of Hugh, who was now safe in the diocesan seminary at Kilmoy, awaiting his transfer to the theological college in the same town, and Mrs. O'Dowla found her most cherished ambition realised in the prospects of her son, to whose ordination she now began to look forward as the crowning event of her life.

Julia's public "reception" into the Order had been fixed to take place in a few days' time, and, in the interval, Mrs. O'Dowla had been busy superintending the preparation of her daughter's *trousseau* on a scale of lavish magnificence, exceeding even the ample instructions of the Reverend Mother.

"Sure, if I was preparing for her wedding to an ordinary man I'd give her a thruss-oh that 'ud do credit to the Pensers of Ballygrauver, but, God be praised, when she's becoming the spouse o' Christ an' the Church why should I begrudge anything that I can afford or that money can buy?"

It is a remarkable characteristic of the Irish, par-

ticularly observable amongst Roman Catholics, for it is cherished and fostered by the priests, that, when in company, they cannot seriously concentrate their minds on any subject for an appreciable length of time. And this corporate levity stands out in striking contrast to the gloom and melancholy in which individual Irish men and women are wont to brood over and nurse their grievances. Thus the most farcical and ribald stories are told at wakes, at which even the relatives of the deceased will not hesitate to smile in company, no matter how broken-hearted each may be when alone. Nay, while a crowd of servant boys and girls are waiting their turns to go to confession at a country "station,"[1] the broadest tales and funniest stories will often circulate amongst them in whispers accompanied by stifled laughter, though each individual in the company may be oppressed with terror at the approaching confession and the concomitant danger of being "put off" and refused the Eucharist, in the presence of all their neighbours.

"I attinded a Quaker's meetin' wanst in Cork 'um," said O'Pollards abruptly. "You know what a Quaker is 'um, what?"

"Why, then, I don't," said Mrs. O'Dowla.

"Yer remark about Miss Julia being the spouse of Our Lord an' the Church, as she'll be in reality, reminds me of it 'um," said O'Pollards, "but, sure we'll be dead long enough, what? Begob, I just walked in, an' there they were 'um, about two dozen of 'em. Ne'er a priest, ne'er an altar, ne'er a lighted candle, no confessionals, no stations o' the Cross on the walls, ne'er an altar-boy, an' dead silence, what? Isn't that remarkably like a lie, ma'am? Well," said Mr. O'Pollards, "I swear to you an' your husband 'tis Gospel truth 'um, what?"

Contempt for those who profess all other forms of the Christian religion is very general amongst Irish Catholics; and, coupled therewith, one will always find an amount of disrespect for Christ and the sacred principles of Christianity calculated to shock the feelings of all thinking students of human character.

"An' I wonder you didn't run out for fear o' yer life," said Mrs. O'Dowla. "What savages they must be? Wisha, wisha, wisha!"

"Oh, begor, I stood me ground 'um. You see whin there was no altar, nor candles, nor officiatin' priest, I was free to contind it wasn't a rilligious meetin', an' so I didn't come within the censure o' the Church in attindin' it, what?"

"Case in point, case in point," said Maurice Sawnuch, who was also present in O'Dowla's shop, and whose daughter was to be "received" into the convent on the same day as Julia O'Dowla.

"Dead silence, as I told ye," continued O'Pollards, "an' I was nearly comin' away with meself, when up got an ould woman, a sturdy, wiry ould dame she was too, an' she cried out, with her eyes shut: 'I am married! I am married! I am married!' Well, would ye believe me, I couldn't resist the temptation of puttin' a question to her. 'Pray to whom, madam?' says I, in a loud voice but very civil an' serious, ye know, what?"

"Well, O'Pollards," exclaimed Sporeen, "you never turned around an' told us that before. I never heard it at any rate."

"Let ye be aisy now," said M'Climber.

"Well," continued O'Pollards, "begor, what do ye think but she answered me, without looking around or even opening her eyes. 'I am married,' says she, 'I am married to the Lord.'"

And the entire company burst forth into laughter, as if they had not a single trouble amongst them.

"Very apperapro, d'ye see?" said Mr. Wegless, recovering his breath,

"Very smart entirely, he-he-he, pup-pup-pup!" said John O'Dowla, wiping his eyes with his pocket handkerchief.

"Wait, lave ye have some manners, I'm not done yet," said O'Pollards. "'I am married to the Lord,' says she. 'Well, madam,' says I, getting up, 'I congratulate you upon the respectable family you have entered into.'" And O'Pollards bent forward, slapped his thigh with the

palm of his hand, and broke out into an ear-splitting cachinnation in which he was joined by all the others.

The ceremony of reception, or assumption of the white veil by Julia O'Dowla and Miss Sawnuch, was conducted by Bishop O'Grenaghan "with great *éclat* and impressiveness," and, as the Cork newspapers put it, "in presence of a numerous and distinguished assembly of clergymen and the relatives of the young ladies who have decided to consecrate their lives to God and the Church; and the entire company were subsequently entertained at a sumptuous *déjeuner* by the Reverend Mother and the good nuns of the community."

It was John O'Dowla who paid for this *déjeuner*, though the nuns got the entire credit for it; and, when the bill was presented to him, it almost took his breath away. He had entered into an undertaking to pay the Reverend Mother, after a prolonged process of haggling, a sum of seven hundred and fifty pounds, as his daughter's fortune, two years from the date of her "reception," when Julia would assume the black veil, and when her "profession" would be celebrated with increased solemnity and a still more elaborate *déjeuner*. During the intervening period Julia's position would be that of "a white veil" or novice; and she would be at liberty to alter her decision and leave the convent; and her father would be furnished with a quarterly account for her maintenance. John O'Dowla derived much consolation from the fact that he was to be under no expense whatever for the further education of his son, Hugh; and, though at first incensed at the slight upon himself which was involved in Hugh's adoption of the surname Penser, he gradually grew accustomed to hearing Father O'Darrell speak of the young man as Eugene O'Dowla Penser.

Meantime things went very badly with the O'Briles, who were boycotted with vigorous cruelty. Neither clerks, servants, nor labourers would work for them; and none of the necessaries of life would be supplied to them in Gallowglass. They had to buy their wearing apparel in Cork by stealth. They baked their own bread with flour carted at night from some undiscoverable place

of origin. They had to get their horses shod at some distant forge. As none of the Gallowglass labourers would work for them, Mrs. Pinkerry's farm remained a wilderness of weeds and broken fences. They bought some milking-cows surreptitiously at Cork market to supply the family with milk, and were fortunately accommodated with mangolds, turnips, and fodder by Lord Gallowglass's new agent, a Captain Thunder, who ruled the tenants with a rod of iron, insisting upon the payment of the rents to the uttermost farthing on the appointed gale days. And it is regrettable to record that the new agent was feared and respected in proportion to his severity.

Nobody would sell wool or hides to Thomas O'Brile, so that his lucrative trade in these commodities came to a standstill. He could neither buy nor sell pigs; and nobody would purchase his vegetables, and those sections of his business were also lost. As for his house and shop, the windows remained unglazed and the fixtures unrepaired for three months after the night attack. His chief business was, therefore, utterly destroyed; and his debtors, taking advantage of his troubles, refused to pay their accounts. At length an English firm of shop-fitters, at a special price and under police protection, put his shop into order; but when the English mechanics had departed from Gallowglass, his customers refused to return; and it became a standing joke in the town that grass was to be seen growing at O'Brile's doorstep.[2] Ignatius O'Dowla, unshaken in his attachment to the beautiful Norah O'Brile, assisted the O'Briles in a thousand ways. O'Rourke adhered faithfully to them during this trying period, doing as much work as two ordinary labourers; and the young man's character was so much improved by the demands made upon his moral strength that he ceased to be a sensuous loafer, and developed into a firm, industrious man. Edward O'Brile grew suddenly from boyhood to manhood, and thereby benefited by the persecution to which his family was subjected. He now found himself with an object in life; and in every emergency he exerted himself to the utmost, with brain and hand, to help his father. Mrs. O'Brile

was as firm and resourceful as she had ever been, and her eldest daughter, Norah, emulating her mother, displayed an energy and strength of mind which astonished the barony of Killafastare, where girls of her class, convent-bred for the most part, are helpless and mincing as a rule, full of human respect, without any sense of responsibility, and wanting in almost every sphere of knowledge and usefulness.

"'Tis unnatural the way that Norah O'Brile is goin' on," said Mrs. O'Dowla one Saturday evening, with the object of sounding her son Ignatius. "I hear she's to be seen diggin' in the vegetable garden; an' her sister, an' herself milkin' the cows, washin' and cleanin' just like two servant girls. What would Jule say at all if she saw 'em?"

Ignatius blushed slightly, but was silent.

"An' Father O'Darrell tells me that not as much as a single mass was ordered by Mrs. O'Brile," continued Mrs. O'Dowla, "nor as much as wance did Tom Brile ask the pasthur's advice during the misfortunes that God has seen fit to send down on him. 'Tis awful, the Lord be praised!"

"I don't think either of the O'Brile girls would set much store by Julia's opinion, ma'am," said Ignatius gravely. "They are doing all that you have heard and a great deal more besides. I hope we shall all live to see the day when those who are persecuting them now will be ashamed of their action. But, for the O'Briles, it must be always a source of pride to remember how bravely they faced and conquered their unmerited troubles."

"Gu-vo-gu-deering!" said Mrs. O'Dowla heaving a sigh.

John O'Dowla smiled, but said nothing. He knew from experience that Thomas O'Brile was a wealthy man, and that, if the present trouble should pass away, Norah O'Brile would receive a dowry far larger than anything which he, John O'Dowla, could have afforded to give his own daughter, if she had elected, as they said in Gallowglass, "to remain in the world." As a Nationalist, he could not openly countenance his son's intimacy with a

daughter of Thomas O'Brile; but, as a father, he secretly approved of the existing relationship.

The police did not take any further proceedings against Edward O'Brile, and thereby proved the soundness of Mr. Benmore's view of the case. Not a solitary prosecution was made in connection with Mr. Culvert's murder, the assault on the constables at Garekiln, or the attack on O'Brile's house. One would have concluded that the authorities had got no inkling as to the existence of the Society of Valiants in Gallowglass. But, curious to relate, the Dublin Castle officials ordered the arrest of the Boss by whom the Society had been founded, and his unexpected seizure caused the organisation to collapse. Mr. Nicholas Quisk, T.C., P.L.G., received a broad hint from the superintendent of the detective department of the Dublin Metropolitan Police to avoid the company of American politicians, or he would run the risk of forfeiting not only his licence for the sale of intoxicating liquors, but also his personal liberty. And Councillor Quisk took the hint without pressing the mild-mannered superintendent for further information as to the grounds on which the advice was administered. O'Rylan had been arrested on his return to Dublin, and he "informed" on every point except his own share in the murder; but, as he did not know the Boss, and as he was in complete ignorance of Quisk's connection with the Society, his could not have been the information on which the police had arrested the Irish-American. He had been put to the question in Kilmainham and in the Castle, though the rack and pincers were not brought into use; but beyond pointing out the members of the Labourers' Benevolent Society who had introduced him to the Valiants, he did not give the authorities much explicit information. His wife and family might be seen sunning themselves on the lawn before the building, known as the Informers' Home, at Clontarf, while O'Rylan was being examined at Kilmainham. They, at all events, had found peace for the moment, and a prospect of respectability for the future. When at length O'Rylan was released from custody, he and his family set out for Canada, and were

there given a new start in life at the expense of the British Government.

The Boss's arrest created an extraordinary commotion. The Secretary of State at Washington demanded his immediate release as an American citizen, and the peremptory request was complied with and a profound apology tendered at the same time to "our American cousins." The Boss had not been many weeks re-settled in the States when news reached Ireland that O'Rylan had been shot through the head, while at work near his settlement in Manitoba, and that his murderer had not been discovered. It was also recorded in the Irish newspapers with the warmest approval, that the Boss, "whose fervent patriotism," to quote *The Hero's Journal*, "only merited a felon's cell under the régime of Cromwellian Ascendancy in Ireland, had been singled out by the United States Government, whose statesmen knew how to appreciate the ability of its Irish citizens at its proper worth, for a high post in the American Embassy at Constantinople."

One Monday afternoon, Councillor Quisk, as he was going to the City Hall, had seen Bishop O'Grenaghan driving into the Upper Castle Yard in a cab. It was several weeks after the conference at Gallowglass; but the bishop's visit to that "Home of Misrule" can have had no connection with politics, for it was well known that he had come to Dublin to consult the cardinal. The episcopal cab stopped opposite the Chief Secretary's office at the left-hand side of the entrance gate, and Nicholas Quisk held his breath as he saw the extraordinary deference with which the Bishop of Kilmoy was received by the porters and constables in plain clothes who are always to be found in the flagged hall. He was even helped up the steep staircase by an officious attendant, who evidently knew him well, showing clearly that this was by no means Bishop O'Grenaghan's first visit to that place which is held accursed by all true Irish patriots. But Nicholas Quisk did not, of course, behold this. His lordship was detained for a few minutes in the private waiting-room, and as he stood at the window, Bishop O'Grenaghan looked straight down into the Town Clerk's office in the

adjoining temple of patriotism, known as the Dublin City Hall, yet he did not recognise Nicholas Quisk staring up at him. Then he was ushered into the Under-Secretary's room, which looks out upon the Upper Castle Yard, and, after a brief conversation with that urbane and diplomatic official, who was an Englishman and a Protestant, the Bishop of Kilmoy was shown into the presence of the Chief Secretary himself.

Roland Glenpower used to give it as his opinion that the British Government had never discovered a Chief Secretary who possessed as much brain power as his foxhound Skelper; but, let that speculation be as it may, Bishop O'Grenaghan had a most satisfactory interview with the then Chief Secretary, who was a Scotchman. It was noticed that the bishop's nephew was appointed medical inspector under the Local Government Board very soon afterwards; and Dr. O'Grenaghan was assured that a substantial sum of money, close upon twenty thousand pounds, would be paid over to him as a building grant, to be expended, under his own directions, upon the purchase of a site and the erection of buildings for the new Catholic Training College for National Teachers, under entirely ecclesiastical management, in the diocese of Kilmoy. Dr. O'Grenaghan's applications for this grant had been refused several times during the rule of the well-remembered Catholic Under-Secretary whose assassination had so recently shocked the whole civilised world.[3]

About this time, too, the Government "propounded a scheme," under the invocation of Father O'Darrell, by which the ancient endowment of Gallowglass School was "partitioned" and one-half of it, amounting to £1200 per annum, bestowed upon the Diocesan Seminary at Kilmoy.

"Catholics cannot avail of the education (*sic*), so-called, which is purveyed and afforded by this heretical school," wrote Father O'Darrell to the Chief Secretary, in a letter which he sent to the newspapers by the same post and which was received with universal acclamation in the Nationalist press. "For each and every Catholic parent," continued Father O'Darrell, "the faith of his child is a

question transcending in importance all earthly privileges; and, in the face of the repeated declarations of the bishops upon the perils of mixed education, no Catholic father would dare to incur the censures of the Church by sending his son to Gallowglass Endowed School, managed as it is by a Protestant teaching staff presided over by a clerical Protestant headmaster."

The case of Father O'Darrell was "put with such unanswerable force," according to *The Hero's Journal*, that the Government were routed "by the logic of the devoted priest"; and the moneys left in trust by Protestants of the most anti-sacerdotal views, for the promotion of sound, secular, Christian education, in the reigns of James I. and William III., were now poured into the treasury of the Irish-Roman priests' organisation by the operation of law!

[1] The Catholics of one or more townlands assemble twice a year at a farmer's house in the district to go to confession, receive communion, and pay their dues. The priests attend for that purpose, celebrate mass, and breakfast with the family after the devotions.

[2] Such cases were unfortunately quite common in the 'eighties. Only in one case of the kind was the aid of the law invoked, namely, the Tallow conspiracy case tried in 1903. But while the National League was in its zenith, none of the boycotted took legal proceedings. Curious to say, while reading over the proofs of this chapter, I received a letter from a shopkeeper in the South of Ireland, asking for my autograph, and relating what he and his family suffered during the Land League Agitation; "We were the only Protestant shopkeepers in the town," he writes, "and were boycotted for years. *The grass grew at our door.*" A member of his family fortunately obtained a situation which relieved their distress, and the boycott was then relaxed. "But," he adds, "the priest tried to still keep the people out of our shop, but could not succeed."

[3] Mr. Thomas Burke, murdered in the Phœnix Park, along with Lord Frederick Cavendish, in May 1882. It was the Under-Secretary's death which had been decreed by the Invincibles, and the Chief-Secretary was slain solely because he was in Mr. Burke's company.

CHAPTER XXVIII

"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children."—TITUS ii. 4.

MOLLY CAREW, stunned by the disappearance of Hugh O'Dowla from Gallowglass, discredited for some time all the conflicting rumours which were circulated about the young man. But, when a month had passed and he did not reappear at Garekiln, she was driven to the conclusion that he had broken all his promises and had deserted her. She wept bitterly, and even contemplated suicide; and everyone who knew her marvelled at the startling change which had come over her. All the archness and buoyancy, which had made her so attractive, had vanished; and something grim, harsh and sorrowful had entered into her expression.

Canon O'Grauver having given some peremptory orders to Mrs. Carew, Molly wended her way to confession at Mahernacrow on the next ensuing Saturday. The Canon advised her to seek an independent way of living at once, and commanded her not to dwell upon her intimacy with Hugh O'Dowla, which she was now to regard as a thing of the past to be utterly forgotten.

"You're too old to be any longer dependent on your parents, my good girl," said the parish priest; "'twould be right for you to be doing something for yourself."

And the Presbyterian blood in Molly responded to the advice and she said: "Father, I don't know what to do with meself. I work whenever work is to be had, but this is an idle time with the farmers unless I went into regular service with wan of 'em, an' sure—" And Molly began to cry.

"Don't do that, me child," said Canon O'Grauver, "there is so much gossip about yourself just now that your

life would be a burden to you in a farmer's house. Guine to some quite place where you'll be away from the gossips for some months, until the storm is blown over. I may tell you in secret where you'll find such a place. But remember I tell you this under seal o' the confessional. The minister or clergyman who reads prayers for the Presbyterian sect of heretics, to which your father unfortunately belongs, and who lives in Gallowglass, wants a servant. You will get as good, if not better, wages from him than you'd get from a farmer, an' you won't have quarter as much to do. You will be away from the gossips and in six or seven months' time, when all these recent disturbances are forgotten, you may have as much put by as would take you to America, where all your mother's people are,an'where you'll be sure of a good place."

Within a week Molly was employed in the household of Mr. M'Elmore, the Presbyterian clergyman, whose wife found in her a capable, docile and faithful servant. She had been two months in service at the manse, as the Presbyterian clergyman had named his house, when, to the alarm of her master and mistress, Molly requested permission to attend the Sunday service in the kirk with her father. A new birth seemed to have come to her. Her face, always handsome, was now serious and even motherly in its expression.

"We shall be accused of proselytism and be persecuted by the priests!" exclaimed the minister.

"Better consult the elders," suggested his wife timorously.

A special session was convened, and Molly was permitted to join the church of her fathers. Loud was the outcry about it, not only in Gallowglass, but in Mahernacrow, Ballynastackeragh, Furzey Valley. Neenawhoonah, and Ballyslochter, where public references were made from the altars to Molly Carew's perversion, and anathemas were pronounced against all heretics, but against Presbyterians in particular, by Father O'Darrell, Dean Linch, Dr. O'Keefe, Father Flauhool, and Canon O'Grauver. Some months went by, during which Molly Carew continued apparently to grow in grace and increase in merit as a

servant; but her health and spirits became strangely uncertain for a girl of her age and physique. Neither the minister nor his wife observed anything suspicious in her behaviour or appearance, for those who see us continually are often the last to observe those most serious symptoms which strangers will recognise at a single glance. It was Mrs. M'Cameron who called the attention of the minister's wife to Molly's condition, which had been already noticed by all the female gossips of Gallowglass, and had become the subject of public censure amongst the entire Catholic population, from Canon O'Darrell down to Badger and Din from Ireland. Curious to say, Edward O'Brile's connection with Molly was never once alluded to; and it was only the Gareklin men who knew of her intimacy with Hugh, and they never referred to that, for it would be a reflection on the "young priest," as they now called Hugh.

Heads were shaken at the shop doors when the Presbyterian minister appeared in the Main Street, and it was freely bruited about that he was a wicked man, who had "turned Molly Carew into a Protestant," causing her to lose all hope of salvation, and had seduced her in addition, thereby completing the ruin of her, body and soul. Though Mrs. M'Cameron had called the attention of the minister's wife to her servant girl's condition, neither that good woman nor any of the congregation were aware that the minister's moral character was being filched from him by the slanderers of Gallowglass, being under the impression that proselytism was the worst and only offence laid to his charge by the priests and people.

But one day Mr. O'Pollards, after a confidential talk with Father Lawnavawla, broke the evil report gently to Constable Handy over a glass of grog: "'Tis only out o' frinship I'm tellin' you the common rumour that's goin' through the length an' breadth of the country, what!" said O'Pollards, "out o' frinship, not from any desire to crow over yer minister or yer rilligion which, I'm sure, you b'lieves to be the right wan, or you wouldn't be such a blitherin' fool as to b'long to it, what, isn't that fair an' broad minded?"

"I'd turn around, Mr. Handy, and die for me rilligion any day," said Sporeen; "but," he went on, addressing O'Pollards, "I'd turn around an' say, even if Father O'Darrell himself was listenin' to me, that a dacent man like Mr. Handy, Mr. Gordon or Mr. M'Cameron might truly b'lieve that his own rilligion was the right wan. At any rate 'twas right to lave him know, for his minister is the show o' the town. Yerra, 'tis the talk o' the women an' girls at all the pumps in Gallowglass."

"Well, gentlemin," said Handy, wincing under the slander about his minister, "I don't like t' offind any man, but d'ye know what I was toult the noo, this mortal min't?"

"No!" cried O'Pollards and Sporeen in one breath.

"Well, I'll tell ye," replied the policeman, "but don't take 't as an insult till yeer rilligion. I got a lift from the new agent's groom, and he toult me that a labourin' man was talkin' till himself about all the murders that's happening, and the labourin' man said till the groom: 'Sure, I could cure all thim murthers at wanst,' says the labourin' man. D'ye see? 'But how?' says the groom. 'Whinivir there's a murther in Ireland,' says the labourin' man, 'ye may be sure the priest is at the bottom of it. Af ye just kill the priest where the murther is, ye'll soon stop murthers. That's the oany cure. But,' says the labourin' man, 'don't tell me wife that I said so.' Now," continued Handy, "I wouldn't be after offinding ye for a tin-pound note, but what I'm after telling ye is the truth, so help me, but it is just the varry words that were toult till me."[1]

O'Pollards and Sporeen had not a word to say, and Handy left the ground in triumph to hold a consultation with Mr. Gordon.

A special session was convened hastily, at which the Reverend Mr. M'Elmore was put to the question by his elders, and the good man literally fainted when they conveyed to him the common rumour of the town and countryside. The minister was an earnest, emotional man, whose nerves were easily unstrung, and this catastrophe was more than he could bear.

"Quit fra month's holiday," said Handy.

"Nay," said Mr. Gordon. "Stand yer ground like a man af yer innocent. Af yer guilty, fly!"

"I'll stand my ground and clear my character," said Mr. M'Elmore.

"You'll never clear your character here," said M'Cameron. "If th' Archangel Michael proclaimed yer innocence with a trumpet, they wouldn't b'lieve it. I know Gallowglass fra twenty year."

"I can clear it with our own people, though, for some of them seem to doubt me," said Mr. M'Elmore.

Some wealthy members of the Presbyterian body in Cork were consulted with reference to the scandal, and their advice was to take the earliest opportunity of procuring from Molly Carew a written statement of the actual facts properly attested by unimpeachable witnesses.

The minister's wife was the first to broach the matter to her servant, and it was from her lips that Molly learned her own condition for the first time, of which she had had no accurate perception previously, but only hysterical premonitions and nervous apprehensions. But, great though the girl's consternation was, she refused to confide in Mrs. M'Elmore, her spirit rebelling against what looked like disloyalty to Hugh O'Dowla, whom she still loved with all the intensity of which her nature was capable.

"I thought you were converted, Molly," said the minister's wife, "and that you had abandoned all your errors, and had really accepted Jesus for your Saviour."

But neither argument nor persuasion availed with Molly, who only shut her thick lips tighter when the minister and his wife jointly attempted to win an open confession from her.

"That girl must not leave this house on any pretext whatever," said the minister, whose blood was up in consequence of the defamation and ribaldry of which he was the victim. "If the priests can get possession of her now my character will be blighted for ever."

So Molly Carew remained indoors all that day and the following, and resisted every attempt made by her master

and mistress to obtain a confession from her. Towards the evening of the third day her father, William Carew, paid a visit to the manse and came into the kitchen to speak with his daughter, and an angry scene took place between the parent and child, the father urging his daughter to confess and she as obstinately refusing to do so.

And William Carew went his way home, sore at his failure to elicit the truth, and smarting at his daughter's lack of confidence in him, leaving Molly in a condition of unprecedented nervousness and prostration. The minister and his wife decided then to leave her in peace, hoping that her heart would be softened in good time; but all the doors were carefully locked and barred, lest Molly should escape from the house and find her way into one of the many Magdalen Penitentiaries which flourished in Kilmoy and the adjacent dioceses, whither no representative of law or justice might dare to follow her, and where she would disappear from human ken as completely as if she were swallowed up by an earthquake. She joined the household at prayers; but though the minister displayed a fertility of resource, almost amounting to genius, in devising a prayer calculated to melt his servant to contrition and confession, Molly retired to rest uncommunicative.

When day broke, the minister's wife arose, as if she had a forewarning of calamity, and went to the servant's bedroom, which she found disarranged and untenanted. Then, hurrying to the kitchen, she found Molly in the act of endeavouring to escape through a small window. Perceiving that she had been foiled in her attempted flight, the girl swooned and lay prone on the flagged floor, her face white as death. The minister was aroused, and he instantly went for the nearest doctor, who happened, as was then frequently the case, to be a Protestant. Meantime, Mrs. M'Elmore, whose suspicions were aroused by the appearance of Molly's figure, searched the bedroom and found the dead body of an infant hidden under the bedclothes. Dr. Bolton at once diagnosed the case, and the unconscious girl was carried upstairs and placed in

the best bedroom, where the minister's wife did everything for her, under the medical man's instructions, which matronly kindness could suggest.

Meantime the minister hurried to the police barrack and returned with Head Constable M'Petty, to whom he gave a detailed account of the circumstances.

"'Tis a case of infanticide," said the policeman, "but I suppose she'll have to be sent to 'ospital before we can make a charge against her."

"She'll not leave this house," replied the minister firmly, still adhering to his belief that by sticking fast to his guardianship of the girl his character would yet be cleared and the truth brought to light.

The head constable left, and the minister, having learned that Molly was in full possession of her senses and doing well, betook himself to the house of Mr. Stanwell, the only Protestant solicitor in Gallowglass, with whom he had already had several conversations in connection with the case; and the solicitor returned with the minister to the manse.

Hearing that Molly continued to do well, they went to the room in which she lay and seated themselves one on each side of her bed, the minister's wife being also in the room. The minister renewed his appeal to the girl's better nature to save his moral character from the blight which had fallen upon it in Gallowglass through her misdeeds; and the solicitor, with pen and paper ready to take down her confession in writing, supported the clergyman by every professional device resorted to in the law courts to elicit evidence from a reluctant witness. But their united efforts failed completely. Molly's lips remained tightly closed, a look of sullen, dogged determination shone in her eyes, and a hectic flush mounted into her cheeks.

Fearing the consequences of further pressure, the men retired from the bedroom, and Molly was left in peace for the remainder of that day. Towards night, when the labouring population of the town had had their suppers, a crowd of people began to collect at the corner of Bullrush Street near the house of Father Lawnavawla,

and presently the curate appeared at his own door wearing his biretta and soutane and having his stole over his shoulders. The mob rapidly concentrated and surrounded the priest. Then Father Lawnavawla, reading in his breviary, walked up Bullrush Street in the direction of the Reverend Mr. M'Elmore's house—before which he stopped. There were over a thousand people massed together in the street, and many of those present carried stones in their hands and in their pockets, remembering the attack on O'Brile's house in the preceding autumn, and expecting that a like outrage was about to be perpetrated now upon the Presbyterian minister.

Father Lawnavawla knocked loudly at the door, which was opened by Mr. M'Elmore, pale and trembling with excitement. The priest stared contemptuously at the minister for some seconds, while the mob around him hissed, groaned, and called out ribald nicknames. Then stepping back a few paces, and melodramatically raising his right hand, Father Lawnavawla exclaimed in a loud voice, so that he was heard by all the people—

"Mr. Bible-Reader, you have a Catholic girl forcibly confined in your house, imprisoned against her will. Rumour says that you seduced her. At all events she has lost her chastity while under your roof, sir. (Loud cries of 'Stone him,' 'Give him the hardies,' and hisses and groans.) She desires all the consolations of the Church of her birth. I command you to admit me so that I may administer the last rites of the Church."

"The girl has ceased to belong to your communion, Father Lawnavawla," said the minister in tones quavering with excitement, as he stepped forth and stood on his doorstep. "She is no longer a member of your church. She belongs to the Church of her father; she is one of my people, and, therefore, she does not require your religious ministrations."

"I insist upon my sacred prerogative as a priest of God. I demand admission to the bedside of a dying Catholic," cried Father Lawnavawla in stentorian tones, whereat the mob cheered.

And Molly Carew, in her bed upstairs, heard the com-

motion and was at a loss to understand its meaning. She was now alone, for Mrs M'Elmore was in the hall surrounded by her children, prepared to defend her husband from assault. A great stone came crashing in through the window and smashed a picture on the opposite wall into fragments. Molly went to the window just as she was, in her nightdress, and when she saw the street blocked with people, plainly visible in the twilight, she felt faint and sank upon the floor.

Meantime the dialogue at the door below continued. Father Lawnavawla advanced, saying in a loud voice—

"In the name of God and His Church, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, I demand admittance to the bedside of this dying Catholic girl."

"I refuse," said the minister quietly, folding his arms and confronting the priest.

"He struck the priest!" cried the mob near the door, who had seen the minister's action; and it was at that moment that the stone had been hurled at the bedroom window.

"Avaunt, Satan!" exclaimed the priest, raising his hand and staring in the face of the minister.

"Oh, God be praised! the priest is cursing him," cried one of the women who stood in the forepart of the crowd.

The excitement was intense, and, but for the protection afforded by the policemen on town duty, the mob would have swept the minister from the doorstep and stormed the manse. Father Lawnavawla was standing, breviary in hand, within a yard of Mr. M'Elmore. Seeing the murderous expression on the faces of the people, and alarmed at hearing the crash of broken glass, the minister retired and made his door fast with lock, bolt and chain.

The police were fortunately on the alert; and, determined that there should be no repetition of the sacking of O'Brile's house, reinforcements now appeared, under command of Mr. Dudge, driving the mob before them with their batons, and dealing many a resounding thwack on the hard heads of those who came within their reach. Taking in the situation at a glance, Father Lawnavawla began to exhort the people to disperse; but he still main-

THE PRIEST ANATHEMATISES THE PRESBYTERIAN MINISTER

"In the name of God and His Church, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, I demand admittance to the bedside of this dying Catholic girl."—p. 432.

tained his position in front of the manse and resumed his assault upon the minister's knocker, crying out: "I demand admittance, in the name of God, for a priest of God bringing the last rites to a dying Catholic!"

Mr. Dudge approached him and said deferentially: "Had you not better postpone your demand until this riotous mob is dispersed? If you then renew your application, sir, I am sure Mr. M'Elmore will see the justice of it."

At this juncture the minister appeared at a window immediately over the hall-door, and addressing the priest and the police inspector said: "I have informed Mary Carew of your demand for admission to her bedside, Father Lawnavawla, and the girl requests me to say that she does not desire your ministrations."

The announcement was received with groans; and a stone, hurled from the outer fringe of the crowd, struck Mr. M'Elmore on the temple and caused him to beat a hasty retreat, his forehead bleeding copiously.

"I must ask you to come away, sir!" said Mr. Dudge to Father Lawnavawla.

The priest scowled at him and said: "I warn you, Mr. Policeman, not to interfere with a priest of God in the performance of his sacred duty."

The inspector quivered, and for a moment seemed utterly taken aback. Noticing his indecision, the priest went on: "Dare to cross my path, sir, and I will blight you where you stand. The powers of evil shall not prevail against me!"

Mr. Dudge walked away, and Head-Constable M'Petty, accompanied by Constable Handy, approached the priest.

"Father Lawnavawla," said the Head-Constable, "you're fomenting a riot here and you must know it."

"If you don't clear our this at wanst, I'll put y' intil the lock-up as quick as ever I put a drunken man," said Handy threateningly.

The priest quailed; for there was never a sacrificing priest yet born, perhaps, who was not a coward at heart. Does not his profession consist in representing the benign Creator as a God of Vengeance who requires the appeasement of continuous sacrifice on the part of His weak

creatures? Such a conception implies the most degrading estimate of the Deity, for it portrays Him as a bully and a tyrant. And how can the professional agent of a bully, real or imaginary, be other than a bully himself? And do we not find that bullies generally belong to the lowest type of cowards?

"You'll hear more of this," said Father Lawnavawla passionately; but he gathered up the skirts of his soutane and took himself away, terrified by the manner of the blunt Northern, who did not fear him. The mob followed him in his retreat, being led to expect a speech from the windows of the priest's house, in which the Government and the Protestants would be denounced with all the vehemence for which Father Lawnavawla's sermons were celebrated. But they were doomed to disappointment, and betook themselves to the house of the eccentric before referred to, known as Cracked Daly, a publican whose custom it was to deliver speeches from one of his upper windows on occasions of public excitement.

This unfortunate man used to be Mr. Wegless's manager. Having saved some money, he married a barmaid of Thomas O'Brile's and set up in business for himself. He was a talented, cynical man and took an absorbing interest in politics. But, unfortunately for himself, he took a still more absorbing interest in drink, and was frequently to be found blind drunk inside his own counter, while the shop was full of loafers to whom he supplied free drinks as long as they listened to his harangues. To see him staggering to the beer-pump, often assisted by his degraded parasites, was one of the most pitiable sights imaginable. His speeches, delivered across the counter to the drunken cadgers in his shop, seemed to him to be so successful that he determined to address larger audiences in the street from his upper windows. And whenever any important event was recorded in the newspapers, such as the downfall of a Government, the outbreak of a war, an agrarian murder, or one of the many ecclesiastical functions which were always being celebrated, the unfortunate Daly would make his appearance at his sitting-room window over the shop and deliver an inebriate discourse

to a crowd varying in numbers, according to the time of day, from a hundred to a thousand people. And while he was holding forth thus his poor wife would be sitting in tears inside the counter below, trying to keep the mob away from the porter barrels. She often appealed to the priests to advise her husband, but they callously ignored her supplications, recommending her to go to confession and communion regularly, and to have masses offered up for her "special intentions." Daly pursued his mad career unchecked, save when the police occasionally summoned him for breaches of the licensing laws, or when they proceeded against some of his parasites for obstructing the public thoroughfare by stopping to listen to Daly's speeches. The priests never once interfered; and, curious to say, Daly not only "went to his duty" twice a year, but all his speeches were invariably eulogies of the priests and nuns, of the bishops and of the Pope. He used to denounce Garibaldi and the Italian Government, and call for the enrolment of a new Papal Brigade for the emancipation of the Pope, "from his prison in the Vatican," and the restoration of his temporal power. To Daly's house the crowd now wended its way, and there called loudly for a speech. Daly, fantastically arrayed in a light dust-coat with a deep black fur collar, an ample shirt-front, with a Byronic collar and a light blue bow-tie, presently appeared at the window and harangued them for an hour without interruption from the police, who were pleased at the distraction thus afforded to the mob.[2]

While Daly was thus, probably for the first time, serving a useful purpose by his eccentricity, Molly Carew was searching her heart. Having learned from Mrs. M'Elmore the cause of the riot, she made up her mind to confess the entire truth, and thus relieve her benefactors from the imputation cast on their fair fame through her own misdoings. Mr. Stanwell was sent for again, and he took her statement down in writing. It was to the effect that Hugh O'Dowla was the father of her child, that it was on Canon O'Grauver's suggestion she had come into the service of Mr. M'Elmore, the Presbyterian minister, whom she entirely exonerated from all blame, and to whom

and his wife she paid the highest possible encomium for their kindness to her during her stay under their roof. She expressed it as her conviction that the child had been still-born, which was not improbable. The confession was a lengthy one; and the solicitor, knowing that those who advised its procurement possessed a long purse, did nothing to abbreviate its terms. When at length it was completed and read over for her, Molly signed it, and said as she did so: "I was a savage till I came under this roof. Now I know what it is to think an' be a human being. If I had a duty to him that wronged me, an' who, perhaps, was equally wronged by meself, which kept me from injuring his fair fame, sure, I have a greater duty to them that set me right an' did something to show me the meaning of the word of God."

Head-Constable M'Petty said that he could not pass the case over, and that Molly must be charged with infanticide. The minister was so emphatic in his resolve that she should remain at the manse that M'Petty arranged to get a Justice of the Peace to come to the house and take the charge, and formally bind Molly over to appear at the next assizes, the minister and solicitor becoming sureties for her appearance.

Gallowglass now grew as suddenly apathetic about Molly Carew as it had been formerly interested in her. But the Presbyterians felt that they had won; and there was a special corkiness visible in the gait of Mr. Gordon, Mr. M'Cameron, and Constable Handy, as the three members of Mr. M'Elmore's congregation chiefly concerned. But the "young priest's" name was never mentioned, and neither John O'Dowla nor Mrs. O'Dowla ever directly heard the facts of the case, though such shrewd people as they were cannot have been without their suspicions.

When the judges came to Cork to hold the summer assizes all the Nationalist papers printed vain-glorious articles belauding the country on its "crimelessness." But the list of crimes would have been further diminished by one if Molly Carew had got into the custody of the priests in one of their Magdalen Asylums or any of their

other institutions; for the authorities dare not investigate cases of infanticide or birth-concealment which occur within the portals of those sacred places.

The judge, who presided in the Crown Court for the trial of criminal cases, was a Catholic who owed his promotion largely to the intercession of the priests. He scorned the means to which he had been compelled to have recourse in order to gain a seat on the judicial bench. He was an able man who, if he had not been a Roman Catholic, would have got his promotion as a matter of course as the due reward of his abilities. He put the case of Molly Carew last on the list; and, therefore, it was at the fag end of the assizes, late in the afternoon and in an almost empty court, that the case was called. Molly was placed in the dock, and took her stand on the spot on which a man had been sentenced to death in her presence on the preceding day.

Mr. and Mrs. M'Elmore, by the special permission of the judge, went into the dock and seated themselves one on each side of the accused, who pleaded "not guilty" in answer to the charge read out against her by the deputy-clerk of the Crown. For the Clerk of the Crown himself, being "a pasha of many tails" in those days, used to be away recruiting his health at the Riviera, or in the Canary Islands, at assize-time. Two of the ablest barristers on the circuit had been briefed in defence of Molly Carew by Mr. Stanwell, acting on the instructions of the wealthy Cork Presbyterians before mentioned. They desired to make Molly's confession public, but they failed to see how they could use it as evidence; for it referred to the paternity of the child, a question which was irrelevant on the charge of infanticide. One of the barristers suggested handing up the girl's confession privately to the judge at the commencement of the case; the other advised holding it back until the case for the prosecution had closed and then "discharging it like a bombshell" at the Crown. But the wiser counsels of the first barrister happily prevailed, and, when the case was called and Molly had pleaded, the senior counsel for the defence said: "I have some documents to show your lordship in

this case, and I shall take your lordship's advice, after you have perused them, as to whether they should be read in open court or not. The moral character of some of the innocent parties concerned, whose names are mentioned in these documents, has been grossly defamed and some reparation should be made to them in a public manner."

" I object, my lord," said the Crown prosecutor.

" Give me the document," said the judge putting forth his hand. And Molly's confession was passed up to the bench.

When the judge had read it, he was observed to blush, and he remained silent for some moments deeply immersed in thought. Then he said hastily: " I adjourn this case till the morning."

" It is the last case in the list, my lord," said the Crown prosecutor, " and, after all, it is a very trivial case. If the defendant will plead guilty to an ordinary concealment of birth, we are satisfied that your lordship should try her under the First Offenders' Act and let her out to come up for judgment when called on to do so. It would be awkward to bring us all here again to-morrow, if it could possibly be avoided."

" I adjourn the case," said the judge decisively, and the counsel for the Crown resumed his seat.

In the evening the judge invited the barristers for the defence to visit him at his lodgings, and held a long consultation with them in reference to the case.

" You see," said the judge, " this is a peculiar case. There is not much in it from a lawyer's point of view, but there is a great deal involved in it from the standpoint of public policy. I know that the Government are very chary at present about doing anything which would appear like treading on the corns of the clergy. I therefore advise you to plead guilty in the morning to an ordinary concealment of birth, and I shall let your client off scot free."

The counsel for the defence consented; and, when the judge was left alone in his lodging, he ruminated over the case and smacked his lips: " I despise these priests," he

said to himself, "as much as any man. I scorn their supernatural pretensions. But, but, how can I forget that the Government hesitated long to appoint me to the bench when the vacancy arose; and that the Chief Secretary consulted the cardinal; and that I too wended my way to the Jesuits first and the cardinal afterwards, and invoked their assistance on my behalf. And, to my disgrace be it said, I promised the priests that if ever the interests of the Church were at stake I should hold myself bound to protect them if I could do so without forswearing myself. And this is pre-eminently a case in which I can do so, without breaking my oath to my sovereign to do equal justice between her and all her subjects alike. This case must be hushed up, and I shall win the cardinal's gratitude by hushing it up. I may have to invoke the aid of the priests again, if a vacancy occurs in the Court of Appeal, as it may at any moment, and if I am compelled to press forward my claim to promotion on religious rather than on professional grounds."

When the case was called in court next morning, the judge said: "Does the prisoner plead guilty to the minor charge?"

"Yes, my lord," said Molly's senior counsel.

"Do you accept that plea," asked the judge, addressing the Crown Prosecutors, "and do you withdraw the charge of infanticide?"

"We do, my lord," replied the counsel for the Crown.

"Are Mr. and Mrs. M'Elmore in court?" went on the judge.

The minister and his wife rose fearlessly in their places in the dock beside Molly Carew, and answered in the affirmative.

"Mrs. M'Elmore," said the judge, with great solemnity, "I commend the conduct of yourself and your husband in this case in the highest terms. You have acted like true Christians, and I hope you will get your reward, if not in this world, assuredly in the next world. I commit this unfortunate girl to your guardianship, and I dismiss her now from the precincts of this court and restore her to liberty."

"There is no necessity, me lord," said William Carew, "she has a home of her own."

But the judge ignored the interruption and hastily left the bench. The barristers, solicitors, and other occupants of the court then dispersed, and the assizes were over.[3]

Next morning the Presbyterian party in the South of Ireland searched the columns of the daily press in vain for a report of the case. Not a line appeared in reference to it, either in the Nationalist or Unionist papers of Dublin or Cork, although there had been several reporters in court. Mr. M'Elmore had vindicated his character to the satisfaction of his own people, but, as Mr. M'Cameron had wisely said, the Catholics of Gallowglass would never hear of his innocence, or of Hugh O'Dowla's guilt, in accurate terms.

The minister and his wife were wending their way along the shaded side of Patrick Street on their return to the railway terminus after the trial, when they encountered Mrs. O'Brile, accompanied by her daughter Norah and Ignatius O'Dowla. Mrs. O'Brile knew the true facts of the case, and, knowing Molly's mother for so many years, she felt compassion for the injured girl, having a keen fellow-feeling for all who, like her husband, were the victims of popular misrepresentation and prejudice. She offered to take Molly into her house as a servant, promising to pay her liberally and give her full permission to attend the Presbyterian or any other form of worship she might desire. Mr. and Mrs. M'Elmore consented, for they felt Molly's continued residence with them would only mean a prolongation of sectarian strife. And the minister returned to Gallowglass with his wife, and Molly Carew went home with the O'Briles. On their arrival at Gallowglass railway station, Father Lawnavawla, accompanied by a Mortification Sister from Furzey Valley, accosted Mrs. O'Brile, and said:

"I ask you, as a Catholic, Mrs. O'Brile, to give this young girl into the charge of this holy nun, who will give her a safe home for the rest of her life, and assured salvation, in the Convent of the Mortification at Furzey Valley,

where, as you are aware, the community have an excellent Magdalens' Home."

"I'll do no such thing, Father Lawnavawla," said Mrs. O'Brile, preparing to depart. "I have some knowledge of that Home, and it seems to me to mean imprisonment for life, or, rather, a living death, for many a poor girl who, like Mary Carew, was as innocent after her fall as she was before it, and who deserved no such fate as to be herded with abandoned sinners for the rest of her days, working for no wages from morning till night."

"Do you dare to calumniate the good nuns?" said the priest, pointing to the sister beside him, with her white *bandeau* and *guimpe*, and her immense brass crucifix on her breast.

"I dare to do my duty, sir, which is more than you and the members of your cloth have done by me and mine," replied Mrs. O'Brile in a most determined tone. Then, turning to Molly, she said, "Molly Carew, do you desire to go with this nun, or do you prefer to come with me in accordance with our bargain?"

"I wouldn't go with the nun on any account, ma'am," said Molly doggedly. "I'd rather drown myself in Ounacurra."

"You hear that, Father Lawnavawla?" said Mrs. O'Brile.

"I do," said the priest, "it is the voice of the devil speaking through the mouth of his child. Her blood be upon your head. I bid you good evening." And he walked away in company with the Sister, a gaunt, red-faced woman of fifty years of age.

"I'm damn—I mane I'm very—glad the Carew heifer has come to her right place at last, sir," said O'Rourke to Edward O'Brile that evening, when he beheld Molly in the kitchen. "She'll do as much work as three women, an' the young ladies will get a chance of keeping their hands dry."

The violence of the boycott of the O'Briles had for some time been showing symptoms of abatement, and customers were returning to the shop. At first poor people came, hoping to ingratiate themselves with the

O'Briles, and get substantial "thillas" with everything they bought. Then a better class of persons, like Mrs. Carew, some in need of temporary credit, others with an eye to future favours, began to make their appearance. At length some unemployed labourers offered their services to Thomas O'Brile, and two young girls also came to be trained as domestic servants. The sons of two small farmers from Ballyslochter soon afterwards came to reside in the house as shop-apprentices, from whom no fee was required, and even farmers themselves were beginning to obtain their supplies at O'Brile's as before.

William Carew left Gallowglass soon after the trial of Molly, having accepted a post as bailiff in the North of Ireland. When he settled down in his new home, which was in the land of his forefathers close to the northern shores of Lough Neagh, he insisted on all his children accompanying himself to the Presbyterian service on Sundays; and Mrs. Carew offered no serious objection to that startling innovation.

"We must aither be Pagans, or Atheists, or Christians," Carew said to his wife. "When we were in Gallowglass the children were growing up Pagans, creatures without minds or wills, full o' superstitions, believing that the priests were miracle-workers who could make or mar people here an' hereafter, as if every wan of 'em were God himself. That was wrong. When I consented till lave 'em become Catholics, I thought the Catholic religion was no different from me own, an' that it left a man or a woman a free mind; but I find that it is not a Christian religion at all, but a mass o' the very superstitions which Christ came on earth mainly till abolish. I find likewise that 'tis a political society that interfares with every handstir a body gives; a kind o' benefit society for the priests; an' that th' end-all an' be-all o' the whole business is till enable the priests an' nuns till suck the blood our the people."

Mrs. Carew found the priest in Antrim a very poor, humble, and ill-paid official, and his flock consisted altogether of cotters on the mountain-sides, who did homework for the linen merchants of Ballymena, and who were the only distressful people in the neighbourhood.

As the chapel was a long way off, she only went on state occasions to assist at that sacrifice which, in the priest's opinion, is more necessary to salvation than moral rectitude itself. The atmosphere of independence in which she now lived made its bracing qualities felt. She saw herself surrounded by a husband and children whom she knew to be improving in strength of character and self-helpfulness with advancing years, and she soon began to find some happiness in her own life, causing her to entertain doubts about the truth of that doctrine of sacerdotal infallibility which had maimed her intellect in childhood and had oppressed her like a nightmare during the most promising years of her life.

Molly Carew found her situation at O'Briles' so happy that she refused to accompany her family, much to the gratification of O'Rourke, who declared that if she had left Gallowglass he should have "hevved himself into th' Ounacurra, or med thrax for Rio Janniro, or Timbuctoo, or some other place near the back o' Godspeed!"

Molly walked courageously into the Main Street every Sabbath morning, and attended worship in Mr. M'Elmore's church; but she joined the O'Briles in their nightly prayers, and read a little of her Bible to herself afterwards, finding that consolation in the everlasting book which she had sought after in vain elsewhere.

[1] I have it in writing, on excellent authority, that the words repeated by Handy were actually used by a Catholic peasant (to my informant) in the year 1882.

[2] The original of Cracked Daly is well remembered by the author.

[3] Cases like this are not infrequent in Ireland, I regret to say. In 1902, a case, similar in many essentials to that recorded in the text, came before the court, in which the guilty party was the superior of a monastery, and the innocent victim of the slander was a Presbyterian minister.

CHAPTER XXIX

"With deep affection and recollection,
I often think of the Shandon bells,
Whose sound so wild would, in days of childhood,
Fling round my cradle their magic spells."
—Father Prout.

Hugh O'Dowla Penser pursued his studies for some years at the theological college in Kilmoy, without once returning to Gallowglass, his long summer vacation being spent abroad in company with one of the college priests. In the interval Ignatius O'Dowla obtained his medical degree at the Queen's College with great distinction, and at once obtained a berth as ship's surgeon on board a Canadian mail steamer. After one or two transatlantic trips, he took a house in Gallowglass, and commenced to practise in his native town. The boycott of the O'Briles had completely died away in the meantime; Thomas O'Brile was once again making money at all his various businesses, and Dr. O'Dowla's engagement to Miss Norah O'Brile became a recognised fact.

Meantime a vacancy occurred in the representation of Gallowglass, and the Crown and Hanaper Office issued a writ authorising the sheriff to hold the election. On the day appointed for the nomination, John O'Dowla, accompanied by his son, Ignatius, Mr. Denis O'Loobera, M.P., his proposers, seconders, and assenting burgesses, walked proudly to the Town Hall and handed in twenty nomination papers. Mr. O'Dowla and his party sat there for three hours, waiting for an opponent to turn up, spoiling for a fight, politically speaking; but, to their own amazement and the ill-concealed chagrin of the sheriff, no rival candidate was nominated by the Liberals or Conservatives; and the sub-sheriff was reluctantly compelled to

declare John O'Dowla, esquire, duly elected to serve in the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland as member for Gallowglass, scornfully accepting the new member's cheque for twenty-five pounds.

"I'd be after receiving five hundred pounds to-day, so I would, if there was a contest," said the sub-sheriff disconsolately.

John O'Dowla's hands were shaken until they almost dropped from his shoulders; or, as the local paper put it next day: "If Mr. O'Dowla, M.P., had as many hands as Argus, and as many eyes as Briareus, the popular idols of old, he would have found employment for each and every one of them in descrying and responding to the congratulations of his friends and admirers."

All the loafers in Gallowglass besieged his shop, begging for money wherewith to drink the health of their member. A tar barrel was lit and carried through the street, followed by the Mahernacrow brass band playing "The Rakes of Mallow" and "The Boys of Kilkenny" to celebrate "the popular triumph"; and Cracked Daly delivered a speech from his window in honour of the event.

John O'Dowla felt as if he had been born again when he awoke in his own bed on the morning following his election. He could more or less feel the sensation of being an M.P. tingling through his frame. When he emerged into the Main Street, he was on the point of uttering his usual exclamation, "Glory be to God for all his gifts and graces!" but checked the words ere they passed his lips, as an expression which might not be diplomatic enough for a Member of Parliament.

Father Lawnavawla's figure loomed in view on the opposite side of the street, wending his way towards the Convent to say morning mass for the nuns.

"Good morning to you, John!" cried the priest from the opposite sidewalk.

O'Dowla looked up. "Morrow-morrow, sir!" he cried, rushing to the kerb stone and balancing himself on its edge.

"Come across, John, I want to spake t' yeh," called out the priest.

O'Dowla hesitated. Rain had fallen during the night

and the limestone road was covered with a thick paste of gutter.

"Don't delay me, don't delay. I'll be late for the Convent mass!" cried out the curate.

"I'm coming, sir!" cried John, plunging into the gutter and bounding on tiptoe across the road: "Pup, pup, pup! Glory be to God!" he exclaimed, stamping on the flags and shaking the gutter from his boots.

"An Act o' Parliament ought to be passed," said the priest, "compelling the Government to take charge o' the roads and have all repairing in the hands o' Treasury officials. Sure it ought, oughtn't it?"

"See here, sir!" cried O'Dowla, "that's the first thing I'll get done in the House o' Commons, as sure as me name is John O'Dowla!"

"Not the first thing, John," said the priest; "your first care must be to secure the foundation, or subsidisation, of a liberally endowed University under the control of the bishops an' priests of Ireland. But, in the manetime, Doctor O'Keefe wants you to ask a question relative to th' appointment of a Protestant to the position of post-mistress at Furzey Valley at a salary of £15 a year. I have the question drafted an' I'll give it t' yeh this evening. I must be off now."

When John O'Dowla had recrossed to his own side of the street, O'Pollards appeared, bringing with him a conglomerate odour of spirits and grocer's sundries. "John," he cried, buttonholing O'Dowla, "when you goes into Parliament, the very first thing you'll do, will be to put that question to the Chief Sectary, what!" And O'Pollards thrust a paper into O'Dowla's hands.

"Pup, pup, pup!" exclaimed O'Dowla. "What's all this about?"

"Read it! Read it, can't you?" cried O'Pollards.

O'Dowla looked scrutinisingly at the scrawl before him and read: "I begs to ask the Chief Sectary to the Lord-Leftinnant of Ireland, if he is aware that a certain party, a general merchant residing in the Main Street of Gallowglass, was publicly insulted by a common peeler on the 27th inst., while standing at the door of his own establish-

ment and, if so, what official notice will be taken of the matter ? "

" Is that right ? What ? " asked O'Pollards.

" What do it refer to ? " inquired O'Dowla.

" I was standin' at me own door meself last night after your triumphant return, whin a bobby, that infernal Presbyterian, Handy, rushed in apast me. ' You have parties here, Mr. O'Pollards,' says he. ' 'Tis a lie,' says I, ' Won't you take me word ? what ? ' Not a syllable out of him, but in he tears to the parlour, where Sawnuch, Sporeen, an' a few o' the townspeople, the burgesses, were just havin' a half-wan or two after the day. What ? 'Twas after closin' time, I admit. But, mind je, no money passed. Not a keenogue.[1] Sure, I'll never charge a pinny for what was sold, what ? He's goin' to summons me, but, mebbe, whin this question appears in the paper as bein' asked in the House o' Commons, he'll change his tune. 'Tis too bad to have the people insulted be dungkey-drivers that they pays theirselves, what ! "

" Sure the coats on their backs belongs to the tax-payers ! " said O'Dowla.

" Whin are you going ? " asked O'Pollards.

" Before the week is out, I believe," said O'Dowla with a sigh.

" More power to you," cried the other. " Then you'll ask it the very night you gets to Lundun, an' 'twill be on the paper the day after an' the petty sessions oant be till a fortnight. That'll do nicely. Notice that I makes no mintion of names. Well-lathered is half-shaved, what ? I must be running away, the young fella is rackin' off some whisky, an' I'm afraid he might water it too much."

" Too little he means," murmured O'Dowla, as he sought the shelter of his own shop.

At breakfast conversation turned on the departure of the master.

" 'Tis a wander the mimbers don't get free passes to and from Parliament," said Mrs. O'Dowla. " The bare fare'll come to over three pounds. Of course you'll travel third class, John ? "

" Oh, certainly," replied the new member. " Third class

is good enough for any one; but I'll do me best to get the members free, and second class too, on all the lines, when I go into the House o' Commons. There's no society in first-class."

Some days afterwards Canon O'Darrell, as he was now styled, met the new member, and informed him that the bishop had received the privilege from Rome, where he had been recently paying his quinquennial visit, *ad limina apostolorum*, of recommending two laymen of the diocese, one for the title of Count and the other for that of Chevalier of the Holy Roman Empire. A wealthy Irish-American, who had purchased an estate at the North side of the diocese, had been recommended for the Countship, and the bishop had decided to offer the title and insignia of Chevalier to the new Member of Parliament.

"The fays, or fees, to be paid to the Propaganda by Count Maloney will be four hundred an' fifty pounds, but you'll only have to pay fifty for the Chevalier. We got a special reduction made."

"Wouldn't it look like vanity at my time o' life, sir, like as if a man got a set o' false teeth or a wig, if I were to put any such handle to me name now? He, he, he!" And appealing to his wife, he said, "What do you think about it, ma'am?"

"Oh," replied Mrs. O'Dowla, "I'm of the same opinion as his reverence. If the bishop thinks you ought to take it you're better be said be his lordship."

"Here's th' insignia," said Father O'Darrell, producing a parcel and a letter bearing "the seal of the fisherman."

"Oh, my!" cried John O'Dowla, "this is great expedition entirely."

"Give me a cheque for fifty pounds," said the parish priest. "I have to send it off to Rome by the first post."

After much hesitation John O'Dowla obeyed.

"See, Canon," he said, "I have some doubts about it, but I'll never go back o' me word, an' what's more, I'd never break your own word an' the word of his lordship."

"An' whin'll he become a Chevalier?" asked Mrs. O'Dowla. "Will there be a thayological examination?"

"He's wan this minute," replied Canon O'Darrell. "Kneel down on your marrow-bones, John."

And Canon O'Darrell hurriedly initiated the new Member.

The eventful day fixed for the departure of Chevalier O'Dowla, M.P., at length arrived, and Mrs. O'Dowla inquired how many shirts her husband desired her to pack up for him.

"I suppose wan a week'll do there as well as here," replied the Member, "but I'll lave all such culinary matters entirely to yerself."

"Culinary matters it is, sure enough," sighed Mrs. O'Dowla, "for I'll be hard set cullin' out four white shirts that 'ont shame us. Sure 'tisn't all linen shirts you'll want, is it?"

"Don't bother me about it any more, woman," retorted the Member; "I have something better to do besides jabberin' about shirts."

Going to the door he spoke to the foreman: "Now, see, listen to me," he said, assuming a look of fierce solemnity, his face growing dark as night. "While I'm away, see, give no credit to any one whatsoever except the best customers; furnish every account that's due, an', see, write at the foot of each bill, 'Early attention most particularly requested.' If any one asks you when I'll be home, say that you're expectin' me every day and don't know the minute I'll walk in the door!"

"Very well, Shuvvlare," said the foreman.

"You're like a major-general," said Mrs. O'Dowla, still smarting under the rebuff with which her husband had closed the conversation with herself, "Have y' any orders for me?"

Her husband glared at her. "I have," he replied. "Keep your mouth closed till I come home an' you'll do more work than ever you did in your life in the same time."

"'Twill be well for yourself if God gives you grace to keep your own mouth shut, too, in the place you're going to," retorted his wife, and she sailed off to attend to her household duties.

Canon O'Darrell called to remind John that he required a loan on easy terms from the Government to build a

residence for his curates. "An act should be passed," said the pastor, "advancing money at wan, or wun per cent, a, repayable by yearly instalmints in a hundred years, for all Catholic churches and parochial houses."

The new member acquiesced, saying: "Of course, of course, it should, sir; I'll speak to Mr. Fireframe on the point the very first night I enter Parliament."

Mrs. O'Dowla said she thought "the laste the Government might do for the poor people was to build the chapels and perrokyal houses free, *gratis*."

"More power to you, Bridget," said Canon O'Darrell laughingly, "but I fear the millay-nium, or millennium will come before we see that done."

Encouraged by the parish priest's smile, Mrs. O'Dowla continued, laughing between the words: "Don't the Government build the poorhouses and the gaols for the rogues and the misfortunates, and why isn't it ayqually to raison that the pious an' the well-to-do should be provided for? Sure it stands to raison, sir, doesn't it?"

O'Dowla opened his eyes in amazement and stared at his wife. "See here, Bridget," he exclaimed, "there's a party waiting for you in the shop. Go out, an' lave these deep matters to meself an' the pastor."

"I s'pose you'll be home for Jule's profession, chevalier," said the priest. "'Tis fixed for this day three months. In case you don't, you'll want to send the cheque in ample time so that there might be no hitch in the sacred ceremonies."

"Oh, I'll come home certainly, sir," replied Chevalier O'Dowla.

"Chevalier," said the pastor, as he was leaving, "be sure an' go regularly to your religious duty while in Lundun, ayther at Maiden Lane or Hatton Garden, or to th' oratory at Brompton."

Father Lawnavawla called subsequently; and, after a great deal of mystery, entrusted O'Dowla with two documents, one being the question relative to the Furzey Valley postmistress. The other paper was a resolution, marked "to be moved at the first opportunity," which was written in a copperplate hand embellished with many

flourishes: "That, inasmuch as freedom of opinion on religious matters has been proved to result in division and discord amongst heretics and has been proved to be destructive of faith and morals, so also is freedom of opinion on literary and scientific matters equally dangerous to our people and accordingly to be condemned; and therefore be it resolved that no book shall be imported into, or published in this, the island of saints and scholars, unless it has first received the *imprimatur* of the bishops of the Catholic Church; and, furthermore, that all schools of every description be strictly denominational and under the sole control of the clergy of the parish in which they are situated; and that an Act be passed embodying these ideas, and all expenses of same be paid by the Imperial Government."

Mrs. O'Dowla, who had been listening admiringly to the curate's resolution, exclaimed: "God love your reverence! You must be inspired!"

"I suggest that you move the adjournment of the House to discuss it as a matter of public urgency," said the curate. "But Fireframe will do it justice—I'm sure he ought, any way. Sure he ought, oughtn't he?"

"Hallo, John, or rather Chevalier," exclaimed Roland Glenpower, thrusting his head and shoulders into the parlour, "You're not a bit changed, begor. Hair, nose, eyes, mouth, all the same. Height unaltered! Weight as before! Show me till I feel your pulse while you're sticking out your tongue. Members of Parliament are very near the same as common people after all. As Lord Byron, a great authority on such matters, or was it Shakespeare, said:

> 'Honour and shame from no condition rise,
> Act well thy own part; there all th' 'onnur lies!'"

"Excuse me, Roland," said O'Dowla, producing a lead pencil and moistening its point between his lips, "I often heard you coating them lines. I'll take 'em down now for further use amongst the Anglo-Saxons an' the Welsh an' the High Landers! He, he, he."

"Begor, many the man makes use o' my idees," said

Roland. "I'm no egotist, I abominate it, but I throw away as many spare idees—I suppose every master o' hounds does the same—as would stock forty ordinary brains. As Dill, a damn clever man though a Protestant—I often remark that Protestants have a damn sight more brains than we have—as Dill said to me, 'Roland Glenpower,' says he, 'if you had education 'tis far from Glenpowerstown you'd be.'"

"See here, Roland," said O'Dowla, "don't be wandering. Coat the lines; I'm pressed for time."

Roland took a long time to do so. "For," as he said, "I'd reel 'em off slap-bang without any trouble, whin I wouldn't be thinkin' o' what I was sayin'; but 'tis a different thing whin a pistol is put to a man's head like this. The best hunter will baulk when too fresh, or walked up coolly to a fence."

"Pup, pup, pup! My God Almighty!" said John O'Dowla.

Mrs. O'Dowla was confronted across the counter by a small *levee* of female customers who were congratulating her on her newly acquired dignity. But, strange to say, Mrs. O'Dowla was weeping and her eyes were red from frequent contact with her check apron. "Members o' Parliament an' Shevvleers gummoh!" she sobbed, "I wish they left him as he was, at home with his wife an' childerr. What'll I do at all without him? Him that never was out from a male yet; I ax God's pardon, he was out wance the day o' the meeting at Caherconlish."

"Yeh, that's nothing, ma'am!"

"Nobody'd count that," chorused the women, tossing up their hands, and changing their positions.

"He was the best husband an' the knowingest man—" Mrs. O'Dowla was saying; when, seeing Roland backing out of the parlour followed by John, she suddenly stopped, and, walking away from her audience, dried her eyes at the desk behind the shelter of the screen.

Roland turned towards the women.

"Blood alive!" he shouted, opening his arms as if to embrace them all, "what a spanking bunch o' slochter, juicy-looking women!"

His audience screamed with laughter.

"More power to ye, sir!" cried Mrs. O'Larey.

"You're a droll gintleman, Mr. Glenpower!" said Mrs. Arnill. "I remimbers your father, 'twas he was the nice gintleman an' no mistake!"

"A good man like meself couldn't but be well bred!" cried Roland. "I often heard me father wasn't a patch upon me grandfather!"

"See, Roland," interrupted John O'Dowla. "We have many things to look after to-day, packing and all to that. Be going now, be going like a good man."

"Don't mind him, Roland," called out Mrs. O'Dowla. "Stay as long as you like, an' the longer the merrier; 'tis little o' the packing the Shevvleer 'll take on himself."

"Packing!" cried Roland; "he must be going in great state. If you took my advice, ma'am, you'd go with him yourself, for there's no knowing what a game cut of a man like him will be up to away from home. I often saw damn steady goers turn out reckless riders at the heel of the hunt."

"See, Roland, in God's name—" began O'Dowla, raising his hands as if to pronounce a benediction.

"I'm in possession," shouted Glenpower. "In the presence of your grawver wife and these women here, I tell you, Mr. Chevaleer John O'Dowla, Esquire, M.P., I'll watch your conduct in Parliament, and if ever I hear of you giving a soft word to th' inimy, or sittin' silent whin your country is maligned, I'll get me best horsewhip and pack up for Lundun to tan yer hide. I give you me oath before God; or what I consider far more binding, I pledge you me word of honour as a gentleman, I will; and what I say I mean. Good-bye to ye all!" and shaking hands with the O'Dowlas, he rushed into the street laughing.

It had been arranged that O'Dowla was to join company with a brother M.P. at Cork and travel with him by the night mail to Dublin, cross thence to Holyhead, and reach London the following evening. When all the necessary apparel had been packed into the old and shabby but capacious trunk, in which Mrs. O'Dowla had brought her

trousseau to Gallowglass, and when the trunk stood staring the family in the parlour at tea-time, the emotions of the O'Dowlas grew too strong for utterance.

Mrs. O'Dowla was crying as she ate her bread and butter, and the Chevalier would have been weeping, but for seeing her in tears. And though Ignatius laughed at his mother, he found it difficult to keep his own eyes perfectly dry. Those who travel constantly can hardly realise what a wrench it was to John O'Dowla to leave his home and depart from Ireland for the first time. He essayed to rebuke his wife several times, but could not frame the words.

"That trunk is like a coffin in the house," sobbed Mrs. O'Dowla, and then the tears came into the eyes of Chevalier O'Dowla, M.P., and rolled down his face.

"Shut up, Bridget, for heaven's sake!" he exclaimed. "Here's O'Pollards an' Sawnuch, an' Baff, an' a whole lot coming over across the street."

Mrs. O'Dowla dried her eyes, and in a moment the little parlour was crowded to excess by the sympathising neighbours and politicians, who saw nothing wrong in intruding upon the privacy of the family at such a moment, or in disturbing their evening meal. They had many commands to give O'Dowla, with all of which he, being half-comatose, promised compliance. Money was to be lent by the Government to deepen the river up to Gallowglass; to cut a new road down to the deep-water quay; a light railway was to be built at Government expense from Gallowglass to the seaside. These and a host of minor things were to be immediately attended to, or Messrs. Sawnuch, O'Pollards, Sporeen, and ten thousand other Irish patriots would know the reason why.

O'Dowla said simply, "God direct us. I'll put everything before Mr. Fireframe."

Then, when at last they had finished, he arose and begged of them to leave, as he had to bid his daughter good-bye at the convent.

"Good-bye, papa," said Julia, offering her cheek to be kissed; "I hope you'll distinguish yourself in Parliament; don't be rude whatever you do; keep your temper and

write often to me. If anything troubles you, always write to me, and I'll consult Our Mother."

The nun's white *guimpe* swelled with importance like the breast of a pigeon: "You'll come home for the profession, of course, Chevalier," she said.

"Oh, to be sure, ma'am," replied John O'Dowla.

"Indeed, Chevalier," said the Reverend Mother, "I'll offer a special novena myself to the Blessed Virgin for your success, and I'll get the whole community to pray for your happy return."

"'Tis an ould saying," replied John O'Dowla absent-mindedly, "that 'tis a holy an' a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins!"

"Papa!" exclaimed Julia.

The shrewd little nun laughed. "You're very far from being dead, Chevalier O'Dowla," she said, "but I know what you mean."

"I don't profess any knowledge of theyology, ma'am, but the absent an' the dead are much alike," said John O'Dowla lugubriously. "Let ye pray for me by all means. God be merciful to me poor mother, ma'am, she used to to say in Irish—I'll endeavour to translate it for you, but——"

"Papa, you'll lose your train," interrupted Julia, and she presented her cheek to be kissed. Then shaking hands with the Reverend Mother, John O'Dowla left the convent, somewhat elated at having got through a parting which he had expected to be a most trying ordeal.

John O'Dowla was accompanied to the railway station by Canon O'Darrell, Father Lawnavawla, Messrs. O'Pollards, Sporeen, Sawnuch, Wegless, M'Climber, Cracked Daly, and a score of other shopkeepers, followed by a crowd of loiterers.

"Third return to Cork," said John O'Dowla absent-mindedly to the station-master.

"Return!" exclaimed Sporeen. "Don't mind him, Mr. Datson, 'tis a single he wants." And he added, in a stage whisper to O'Dowla, "For th' 'onnur o' God, turn around an' go first-class, or at all events turn around an' go second.

The people would like to see their Mimber turnin' around an' goin' off in proper form."

John paused. "Didn't I always go third?" he asked.

"Were you always a Mimber an' a Shevvleer though?" urged Sporeen. "I'll walk away this minute, if you goes third." Then to the station-master: "Give him a second single, Mr. Datson."

"How much is it?" asked John.

"Two-and-six," replied Mr. Datson.

"Well, needs must when the divil drives," said John O'Dowla, M.P., laying half-a-crown on the counter, "but a third return—a return, mind you, not a single—would only cost two-and-four. I s'pose a single would be only half that again. Sure I don't know, for I never took a single ticket from Gallowglass before."

Canon O'Darrell sailed up, followed by his curate, and said: "Hugh O'Dowla Penser is carrying all before him in Kilmoy. He's the best student of his year in pastoral theology."

"I'm glad to hear it, yer reverence," said John O'Dowla, "for the whole country is givin' up tillage an' takin' to pasture entirely now."

"Sure they're admittin' pastoral holdings to the benefit o' the Land Act now, what!" said O'Pollards.

"That's a very practical thing for a young priest to study, d'ye see!" said Wegless. "Pastoral theology, d'ye see that now?"

"We must go with the times," said Canon O'Darrell smiling, and leaving the subject enveloped in mystery.

The time was up. O'Dowla embraced his weeping wife, bade good-bye to his son, shook hands with all his friends, entered an unoccupied second-class carriage, and the train steamed off amidst cheers and waving of hats and handkerchiefs.

The thoughts of Mr. John O'Dowla, M.P., as the train sped away, ran in a melancholy groove. He had never travelled to Cork in the evening before, and the loneliness of the second-class carriage oppressed him. At every station by the way he stretched his head out of the window, hoping to see an acquaintance to whom he might say

"God save you," but even that consolation was denied him. He startled all the station-masters by informing them that it was "a fine night, thank God," and asking if, in their opinion, "the weather was likely to hold up, as "fine weather was badly wanted by the farmers, if 'twas God's will."

The jolting of the jingle, by which he and his luggage were conveyed to the terminus of the Dublin line in Cork, was terrific, the vehicle surging from side to side over the rutty street.

"Your traces are too long, an' your bellyband too loose!" screamed O'Dowla, biting his tongue at every word as he stuck his head through the small window in a hopeless endeavour to catch the attention of the jarvey.

The bells of Shandon were ringing nine; and, as he heard the chimes, John O'Dowla made the sign of the cross with his thumb on forehead, lips, and chest, as if he had just risen to his feet at mass for the last gospel, and forgetting that the sweet harmony issued from the belfry tower of a heretical church.

While standing in the gloom of the dimly-lit platform, seeing that his trunk was properly labelled, O'Dowla felt a hand laid upon his shoulder. Turning about he found himself confronted by his colleague, Mr. O'Loobera, M.P., a gentleman who had been recently elected to serve his country in the alien Parliament at a moderate stipend of two hundred and fifty pounds a year, which meant riches to O'Loobera.

"Aha, O'Dulla, is that you, old chap?" exclaimed O'Loobera. "Welcome, old man! Welcome to the front! We're on the march, we have got the route, to the frontier. Forward! En avant! Ha, ha, ha!"

John O'Dowla did not know what to say. Mr. O'Loobera had been imbibing whisky, to an extent which clogged the action of his tongue.

"You're now wun-ov-us, wunovus, O'Dulla! Wunovus, do you comprehend? Comprenny voo, Chevalier? Wunovus. One of Fireframe's heroic band, who shake this empire to its base." Mr. O'Loobera waved his long right

arm and smiled at O'Dowla, as if waiting for his con gratulations and compliments.

But John O'Dowla felt ill at ease and simply said: "Will me trunk be all right, d'ye think, Mr. O'Loobera?"

Mr. O'Loobera released his features from the expectant smile which he had set up, and, like a man who has suddenly conceived a brilliant idea, stalked off tragically to the luggage scales. Addressing the porter in a loud voice and imitating the English accent and House of Commons style, he said, "Po-thaw, where aw my baggage?"

The porter pointed out Mr. O'Loobera's modest portmanteau, rug, and umbrella, close at hand.

"Aw, just so! Put Chevalier O'Dulla's baggage with mine, with mine, do you understand?"

"Yessir, till be all right ye needn't trouble yeer heads about it any more for I'll look after it meself an' tell ye whin ye're settin' in the carriage whin I has the luggage in the van sure I'll be is careful o' yeer things is if they wor the Mayor o' Cork's," said the Corkonian, raising the note almost to a shriek as he reached the end of his long sentence.

"Very good, aw, and label all right through for Euston." Mr. O'Loobera looked all round to see if the bystanders were duly impressed with his importance, as he again shouted, rather than spoke, the words, "Label all right through for Euston."

"Come, O'Dulla," he said, when he had issued his mandate, "come to the bawr, to, a, celebrate the ceremony of your becoming wunovus! Ha, ha, ha!" Inserting his left arm under O'Dowla's right, he led the Chevalier off towards the refreshment room. But he turned round after they had gone a dozen paces, and shouted back to the porter, "Label all the Chevalier's luggage and mine right through for Euston, mind! Do you understand?

"You're my pro-te-jee, O'Dulla, my pro-tee-jee, mind you! In my chawge, my custody, so to speak, do you understand, Chevalier? Right through for Euston! Ha, ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho, ho, ho!"

"He, he, he! I'd want some one to mind me, God help us!" said O'Dowla, forcing a laugh.

They had now reached the first-class refreshment bar, inside the marble-topped counter of which the Chevalier saw a stylishly-dressed lady, who smiled and nodded at Mr. O'Loobera.

"How do, Miss Dimples?" said Mr. O'Loobera, grandiloquently, bowing low, laying his left palm on his breast, taking off his hat with his right hand and lowering it till the brim touched the tiles on the floor.

"Take off yer hat, O'Dulla," he said in a stage whisper, turning his eyes up to the ceiling at the same time until the whites alone were visible.

John O'Dowla, startled at the urgent command, hastily pulled off his flat-topped felt hat and held it between his hands, balancing its brim upon his finger-tips like a man engaged in making a collection.

Miss Dimples sniffed, turned her head haughtily, and strutted quickly towards a group of decanters, examining them scrutinisingly, as if she feared some of them had strayed away. Then she returned to the counter, her face arranged in a placid expression, like some fond mother who has just peeped into the cradle and has seen her baby peacefully asleep.

O'Loobera had resumed his hat, but O'Dowla still held his between his hands. Miss Dimples looked at Mr. O'Dowla, and then winked at Mr. O'Loobera who burst into a loud, hoarse laugh. "Chevalier O'Dulla, M.P., let me introjuice you," said Mr. O'Loobera. "This is my most partic'law friend, Miss Dimples, the sheekest young lady in Cork. Miss Dimples, this is my colleague, my, a, pro-tee-jee, my fella-membaw, the Chevalier John O'Dulla, M.P., with whom I am trevlin' to Lenden. Miss Dimples, Chevalier O'Dulla; Chevalier O'Dulla, Miss Dimples! Know and, a, love one another. Ha, ha, ha, ha, haaaa!"

Miss Dimples, finding a suitable opening between the glass sandwich-shades, thrust forth her white hand to be shaken by O'Dowla, who clutched it, as was his wont, and shook it heartily, to the discomfiture of the *chic* young barmaid.

"Ain't there to be a bend to-night?" asked Miss

Dimples, in her English accent, and applying a napkin to those lily fingers which O'Dowla had just clasped.

"Bend!" exclaimed O'Loobera. "Eh, no! Stop though, bay Jove, there is. An address is to be presented to me by the Modern Hibernian Order of New Templars, I think it is. Yes, bay Jove, I had forgotten for the moment. There are such a numbaw of addresses and all to that, that one finds it difficult to—hic—saturate himself, satshrate meself with the contents of all of them—hic. Bay Jove, ma demoiselle, merci!"

Laying his hand on O'Dowla's shoulder, O'Loobera said: "But you'll carry me through, Chevalier, won't you, old man? Put on your hat, pon yer 'at, you'll catch cold! Ponner at! Pon rat! Pon rat!"

Peering round and observing that every one in the bar wore their hats as well as O'Loobera, John O'Dowla resumed his own, and said: "Hee, hee, hee, Mr. O'Loobera, I'm a bad warrant to carry you through, but sure I'll do me best, an' the best can do no more." And anxiously turning to Miss Dimples, he said: "Whin is she jew, miss?"

Miss Dimples started, and arranged her features after the manner of the perplexed schoolgirl.

"Bep-awden? She! Jew! What *do* you mean?" she gasped in her best English accent.

"The train, the night mail to Dublin," said O'Dowla, blushing. "I wonder are we in time."

"Oh! I see," exclaimed Miss Dimples, forgetting herself and speaking in her natural Corkonian brogue, as she looked at the clock. "The mail, you mane. She'll be startin' in twinty minutes. Sure I didn't understand y'."

Three fashionably dressed young men, some years younger than O'Loobera, now strolled into the bar; and Miss Dimples, on beholding them, turned her back on the Members of Parliament without any apology, and, having arranged her stray ringlets, began to shower her favours on the newcomers, for whom she poured out small brandies and artistically split sodas.

O'Loobera tugged his brown moustache and waited until the three newcomers had been served and had re-

ceived their change, hoping for Miss Dimples' return. But that lady seemed oblivious of the existence of Mr. O'Loobera and the Chevalier. O'Loobera frowned. "O'Dulla," he said in a low tone, "we haven't had that drink."

"Eh? What's that?" asked O'Dowla.

"We haven't had that drink we came in for, Chevalier," repeated O'Loobera with emphasis.

"No; we had no drink since we came in!" assented O'Dowla, impervious to the hint.

O'Loobera glared; he turned up the whites of his eyes; he pulled his moustache; he heaved a sigh.

"Miss Dimples," he exclaimed.

Miss Dimples turned her head half-way round without moving her body. O'Loobera smiled at her in his most "killing" manner: "A, when you're dis-en-guijed!" he said, bowing low.

Miss Dimples did not even smile. She turned her poll to O'Loobera, and, addressing her assistant, said: "Miss Wrinkles, attend to Mr. O'Loobera, please."

O'Loobera folded his arms and muttered the word "dammer" under his moustache: "What'll it be, O'Dulla?" he said with forced gaiety. "Give it a name, old boy. 'Tis a small heart never rejoices."

"Half a glass o' spirits," said John O'Dowla. "Anything at all 'll do me!"

"Two small Irishes, Miss Dimples, bep-awden, Miss Wrinkles, I mean. The names, a, awe so vey much alike," said O'Loobera gravely.

When the drinks had been served Mr. O'Loobera said: "Chin-chin, O'Dulla!" and his whisky disappeared.

He spent some time in buttoning his canary-coloured kid gloves, to afford his friend an opportunity of proposing another drink, but John O'Dowla did not do so. At length, casting a forlorn glance at Miss Dimples' poll, Mr. O'Loobera stalked out of the bar with the air of a martyr, his hands joined behind his back and his chin resting on his chest.

The odious strains of an ill-played brass band were now heard, at sound of which Mr. O'Loobera threw up his head, arranged his collar and necktie, pulled his moustache

and glared around the platform, until the bystanders began to stare at him, and to point him out one to another.

"The finger of fame, O'Dulla; the finger of fame," murmured O'Loobera abstractedly, his face upturned to the sky.

John O'Dowla looked up at him in surprise. The crowd was growing thicker; and a passage was cleared for the M.P.s by one of those frantically officious people who are always to be found at railway stations in the South of Ireland on occasions of this kind.

"Gour the way o' the mimbers, ye cawbogues!" screamed this person, pushing, kicking, and knuckling on every side. At length O'Loobera and O'Dowla found themselves in the centre of a crowd of about a thousand people and facing a hideous, ear-splitting, brass band which was playing "God save Ireland." A luggage barrow was at hand and O'Loobera mounted it, dragging O'Dowla up after him.

"Fellow-Irishmen!" screamed O'Loobera, extending his right arm. But as the bandsmen would not stop, O'Loobera could not make himself heard. At every lull in the tune O'Loobera cried out, "Fellow-Irishmen," and waved his hand; but the big drummer or the cymbal-man would come down with terrific crashing and swamp the cries of the orator. The bandsmen seemed oblivious of O'Loobera's existence. They were in a frenzy, like the dancing dervishes of the East; they would not, it seemed as if they could not, stop.

"Stop that band!" shouted O'Loobera.

"Shut up that screeching, do ye want us to lose the train, ye blaguards!" yelled O'Dowla.

"Stop the band!" cried the officious man. "Stop the band!" cried everybody present except the bandsmen. But the band went on, and the brazen din rang out above the shouting of the crowd.

Time was flying, and the members of Parliament grew furious.

"That's a horrid tune," said O'Dowla.

"Abominable, nauseat-hic, revolting!" cried out O'Loobera. "Fellow-Corkmen, fellow-Ir——"

Pebbles were showered in amongst the bandsmen, but they went on until the last stave of "God Save Ireland" had been played, and until the patience of all around had been worn out.

"Quick, be quick, now!" cried O'Loobera. "Where's th' address?" A sheet of foolscap was thrust into his hand.

"Take it as aw read!" cried O'Loobera hurriedly. "Irishmen, Corkmen, New Templaws, to-night I leave (cheers) we leave, Chevalier O'Dulla and I leave (cheers) for Lenden to fight and win (cheers) our kentry's cause (cheers)——"

"Here's th' injin!" shouted the officious Corkonian who had taken the members under his wing.

The station bell rang loudly, and the hissing of the steam from the safety-valve was deafening, as the locomotive backed slowly in to take up its train.

O'Dowla, with tears in his eyes, begged O'Loobera to jump off the barrow and look after their luggage. But O'Loobera stirred not.

"Yes, me friends, to-night we leave for Lenden," shouted O'Loobera.

"You won't lave, if you don't shtir yerself," shouted the Corkonian porter, who had charge of the trunks. "Af ye doesn't bleeve me turn around yeerselves an' watch at th' injin she's after bein' coupled to the mail train!"

"Three cheers for Mr. O'Loobera," cried a man in the crowd, and the mob cheered loudly.

"To-night!" shrieked O'Loobera, "we cross the briny wave for Lenden——"

"I'll go off by meself," roared O'Dowla, jumping to the platform and rushing through the crowd towards his trunk, which he saw put into the van. Then he went to the ticket office and bought a third-class single to Dublin, taking O'Loobera's belongings into the carriage with him.

The last passenger had taken his seat, the doors were all fastened, the guard blew his whistle for the first time, but John O'Dowla with half his body thrust out of the window, saw no signs of O'Loobera. The guard's whistle blew a third time, the engine shrieked, and, amidst a cloud

of steam, the train began to move. John O'Dowla's heart sank within him at the thought of having to travel alone to London and he meditated jumping out.

But at that moment he saw a tall figure racing after the train, covering half-a-dozen yards at every stride, and in a moment O'Loobera, panting and wild, was at the carriage door. John O'Dowla flung it open, and O'Loobera threw himself in, measuring his length upon the floor. Having fastened the door, Chevalier O'Dowla sat down, gasping for breath, and began a "Hail Mary."

"O'Dulla," exclaimed O'Loobera, "you're ma friend! Shake hands. Why did you desert me, man?"

"I feared we might lose the train," replied O'Dowla.

"Train beb-lowed!" cried O'Loobera. "I was just going hic, beginning the lines, you know Tom Moore :—

> "On our side is Vo-chew and Errin
> On theirs is the Sexon an' Guilt,"

when the infernal train whistled, and I fled! Did you get me ticket?"

"No," cried O'Dowla, "I thought you had it!"

"Had it," retorted O'Loobera, "how could I have it? Do you think I make 'em? But, no mattaw, nevaw mind! Political life, plitcalife, O'Dulla, is full of responsibilities and anxieties, full, full up, hic, full, hic, fulluppothem!" O'Loobera was searching the pockets of his frock coat. "Ah, ma baggage!" he exclaimed, fixing his gaze on his portmanteau. "Good! I'll open thee, I'll oh pen thee-ee-ee-ee-ee! But where, oh, where's mee key, meekee, kee-ee-ee-ee?" and singing thus, he opened the portmanteau and produced therefrom a black quart bottle of whisky.

As the train laboured through the long tunnel and up the steep ascent to Blarney and Mallow, John O'Dowla kept humming in a low voice :—

> "Here's the rocky road,
> Here's the road to Dublin."

Mr. O'Loobera refreshed himself from the black bottle: "Keep pup yer spirits, *Chevalier, sans peur et sans reproche*,

pup yer spirits, hic, we're on our way to Lenden. I'll sing you a song about our Irish Pawty, of which or of whom you are now wun, wunovus, you know, wunovus! Words by Mulleady, air by O'Loobera : "

We, Irish Members, are a band,
Led by a noble hero;
Folks say when we come to a stand
Our courage drops to zero;
But keep us fighting all the time
In shindy or in ruction;
What men in any age or clime
So gloried in obstruction?
Tul-ooruloo, for Erin's cause
We'd march to blank destruction,
We recognise no king or laws,
But Fireframe and Obstruction!

What care we for accounts in bank?
Our pride would be to bust 'em!
'Tis we have small respect for rank
Or old-established custom.
When our chaps deign to take the floor
They soon attract attention,
An' draw upon the Saxon's store
Of words not fit to mention.

Sure if we catch the Speaker's eye,
Small thanks to him, the vermin!
Bad eggs by right we should let fly
An' smear his costly ermine!
'Adjourn the House!' 'Divide!' we cry,
'We represent a nation!
For countless wrongs in years gone by
We press for reparation.'

At questions we are masters past,
We first found out their uses,
We make 'em hot and put 'em fast,
We take no lame excuses.
Schottisches, polkas, and hop jigs
We dance upon the paper;
From cardinals to peasants' pigs
We cover in our caper.

To smoking-room and terrace too,
In batches from the lobby,
Constituents and pals so true,
We smuggle past the bobby.
Of passes we get scores and scores
For diamond-spangled lasses,
Who troop to hear the English bores
Or Welsh an' Scottish asses !

We talk as ordered, short or long,
When told to put a tax on
A minister that's doing us wrong,
Or other beastly Saxon.
On Parliament we ketch a grip
Unparalleled an' deathlike.
Each Gover'ment 'tis we can trip
Until it houlds its breath like !
Tul-ooruloo, for Erin's cause
We'd march to blank destruction,
We recognise no king or laws
But Fireframe and Obstruction !

After some further songs Mr. O'Loobera laid himself down to rest and snored until they arrived at Limerick Junction, when he arose and paid a visit to the refreshment room, where he lingered until the last moment. He then apparently slept until they reached Ballybrophy, where he again offered up a libation to Bacchus at the bar and caught his train by a hair's-breadth. Once more he slept until the train arrived at Portarlington, when he again rushed forth into the night to offer sacrifice to the son of Zeus and Semele and again sprang into the carriage in the nick of time.

When the train stopped at Inchicore O'Loobera took a last swig at his black bottle to prepare for the encounter with the ticket inspector. He paid his fare after a long speech, and resumed conversation with his fellow-member.

"What a beastla slow, doosed slow, train, O'Dulla!" he exclaimed, yawning.

"G.S. and W.R.," said John O'Dowla satirically, fixing his gaze on those letters which he had read a million times. "The little boys in Gallowglass say that them letters

stand for Great Scamps and Wonderful Ruffians, an' faith I bleeve 'em!"

"A short bill of wun clause would settle the business," said O'Loobera. "Be it enacted, hic, and so forth, by the Queen's most excellent, and so forth, hic, by and with the consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and, hic, so forth, that all trains conveying Members of Parliament to and from the House of Commons do travel at an average rate of speed, hic, of not less than forty-five miles an hour. There's constructive statesmanship for you, O'Dulla!"

"Very good, Denis, very good. I wished all our Acts were as plain, an' so they would, if lawyers could be excluded from Parliament. Pup, pup, my God Almighty!"

And Chevalier O'Dowla yawned for weariness, exhausted by the first all-night sitting he had endured in the interests of Ireland.

[1] Popularly supposed to be half a farthing.
[2] Anonymous.

CHAPTER XXX

"O Bay of Dublin, my heart you're troublin'
Your beauty haunts me like a fevered dream;
Like frozen fountains that the sun sets bubblin'
My heart's blood warms, when I but hear your name."
—LADY DUFFERIN.

As the train glided down the slope to Kingsbridge station, Chevalier O'Dowla, having visited Dublin once before, on *subpœna* as a witness in a Chancery suit, recognised the outlines of the Wellington Monument in the Phœnix Park as an old acquaintance.

"Oh, my, the monument is in the same place yet, glory be to God!" he exclaimed.

Mr. O'Loobera was still on the flat of his back, his head resting on his portmanteau. "Ah, me! O'Dulla, woe is me!" he exclaimed, yawning. "If Denis O'Loobera were a young man again, beginning life (yawn), he would grave those lines in fire (yawn), in fire upon his brain—

Be wise to-day, 'tis madness to defer,
Next day the fatal president will plead.

Ah, ah, ah! Lost opportunities, O'Dulla, lost opportunities! D'ye remember those lines?"

"Well, then, I don't," replied O'Dowla, "but maybe at another time when I wouldn't feel so much, he, he, he, like after being at me own wake last night, I might call 'em to mind. I read a fair share o' potery in me time."

"They're Gray's, man! No, Pope's I mean! Not quite shaw witch, but no matter, bun-mar, no mar—

At thirty (that's me) man thinks himself a fool,
Knows it at forty (that's not me yet) and reforms his plan.

O'Dulla, *I'll* reform my plan at thirty. I shawn't wait faw fawty," said O'Loobera, resuming his English accent.

"Here we are at Dublin!" said John O'Dowla, and, putting his head out of the window, he cried: "Hoi, hoi, here, you sir, get out me trunk! I'm goin' .to Lundun an' I don't want to lose the steamer! Hoi, hoi, are ye deaf? Hoi, hoi, you sirs!" And thus shouting, the Chevalier jumped out of the train before it had stopped, and was hurled staggering amongst the porters, barrows, cabmen, and milk tins.

O'Loobera, as befitted a more seasoned traveller, alighted in leisurely style, and, raising his hand, beckoned dramatically to a porter with his index finger. "See to this aw baggage. The aw heavy things are in the van," he exclaimed with a haughtiness not unworthy of an Irish Government official touring in Connaught. He hustled O'Dowla into a cab and shouted to the jarvey: "Impec-yawl Ut-ell."

"Pup, pup-pup-pup-poo!" said O'Dowla as the cab rattled, groaned, crashed, and thundered upon the granite setts along the Quays, lurching over occasionally on its side when a wheel became entangled in a tram rail, "I wouldn't live in a large city like Dublin for all I ever saw. The loudest thunderstorm I ever heard wasn't as bad as this carriage, or cab, as you call it; an' I'd say of the two this cab is more dangerous to life and limb." The Chevalier's stricture on the Dublin cabs was amply merited, as every one will admit who has used the rickety and ill-kept vehicles which attend the arrival of the night trains.

After a prolonged tack across the empty width of Sackville Street, the Imperial, then the official *rendezvous* of the Irish Members, was reached in safety.

"Well, Owen, and how are you?" said Mr. O'Loobera condescendingly to the night porter.

"Ah, bed-ad I'm right well, Misther O'Loobera, an' what way are y' yerself? I hope yer keepin' brave," said the Dubliner, speaking the language of the Coombe.[1]

"Mr. O'Martyr been he-aw lately, Owen?"

"No, sir."

"Mr. M'Swillan, or Mr. M'Coratry?"

"No, sir. But Mr. O'Doolahan is just after arrivin'. He must ha' come be the same train is yerselves. An',

bedad, he's as fat as ever, beef to the heels like a Mullingar heifer, sir, so he is, aha!"

"What!" cried O'Loobera, "O'Doolahan in our train! That was shabby, not done like a Pawty man. No, indeed. But those temperance men— Well, no matter. Mulleady been here?"

"Aha, bedad, Mr. Mulleady does be here every other night, bedad, till mornin', sir, so he does!"

"Aw. Good; then the others are in Lenden. In Leh-en-den town of highraynown. In Le-hen-den town of high-a-ray-now-un."

"Is yerself goin' across, sir?" asked the porter, breaking in upon O'Loobera's version of the Blue Danube Waltz.

"Yes, Owen, we're going by the North Wall. But we're going to have breakfast here first; we have some hours to spare, heven't we, avickyo?"

"All right, sir, plinty time, plinty time! What'll yez have? Tay or coffee, rashers, chop, steak, fried or poached eggs." And, having taken their order, the porter went off towards the kitchen.

"Owen, come hither a moment, a momong!" cried O'Loobera. "Have you any, a — has your night stock been exhausted?"

"I has a little left yet, bedad, sir! Sure, I tries to not lave that run out, how is ever, so I does."

"Good. Still a shot in the locker, ha, ha, ha! Well, then, O'Dulla, give it a name. What 'll it be?—Irish or Scotch, soda or plain water?"

"See now, Denis," replied the Chevalier, "lave us have God's grace about us, and guine an' ate our breakfast in the name o' God. Be said by me, an' take no more drink for the present."

"No more drink! That's putting it, a, rather broadly, O'Dulla. It's not parliamentary, dammit, man! I take no more drink! O'Dulla, you forget yourself! But," smiling, "I forgive you, old boy; I love you, I admire you. Owen, show the Chevalier to the lavatory, where he can have a sowse to take the cobwebs out of his eyes, and then, Owen, breakfast, breakfast, breakfast! La-ha-the-ray-hee, titty-o-lah! La-ha-the-ray-hee——"

Owen approached O'Loobera, and, screening his mouth with his hand for greater secrecy, whispered, "Th' Archbishop o' Tara an' Lough Neagh is in the house. Sure, he's crossing be the same boat is yerself!"

O'Loobera whistled and opened his eyes to the extreme limit.

"Where is his Grace going?" he whispered melodramatically.

"Over to see Mr. Fireframe about something or another. Sure, two o' the *Hero's Journal* reporters were with him half the night. He was dictatin' to 'em, so he was! He sin Mr. Mulleady, too!"

"Whew-ew!" said O'Loobera, "affairs of state! Owen, there's a big game on hand. *Haute politique! haute politique!*" And he whispered: "Softly, Owen, softly! O'Dulla, come here, come hither, I have a secret of state to impart. Ti-the-doo-dee-doah, dee-doo-dee-doah!"

"John O'Dowla, who had been standing open-mouthed and puzzled while the others were whispering, approached on tiptoe, and held his ear close to O'Loobera's moustache.

"O'Dulla, the Archbishop of Tara is in the house, and crosses by the same boat with us!"

"Glory be to God! There's no fear of the steamer being lost so. Thank God, thank God! If Bridget could only know it, how aisy her mind would be. Is it to Rome he's going?"

"No, to Lenden, to Wessminstaw, to the House, to see Fireframe! An affair of state, of the very first magnitude, do you understand? Keep it dark; not a word of this till I tell you further. This is a Pawty secret. His Grace knows me."

"I see, I see," said O'Dowla; "but, sure, nayther of us knows nothing about it as yet, do we?"

"Hush, not a syllable! An ill-advised word now might shatter a national policy which it took months, nay, years to devise. Seal up your lips. Hush, not a word!"

On entering the breakfast-room they beheld his Grace, a well-nourished man with a plump face, a high forehead, a firm mouth, and of great bodily substance, seated at a table some distance from them. Mr. O'Doolahan, M.P.,

was also breakfasting, but not at his Grace's table. His Grace was apparently a shy man, for he blushed, with his mouth full to the verge of overflowing, at their entrance; and he was taken with a violent fit of coughing and sneezing, during which O'Loobera stood, with his hands crossed before him, staring at the prelate as if he were an interesting portrait on exhibition, or a strange animal in the Zoo. Behind O'Loobera, Chevalier John O'Dowla, M.P., stood as if mesmerised. He had never before been in the presence of an archbishop, and the suspense to him was dreadful while his Grace continued to cough and sneeze.

At length his Grace was at rest. Then, with hands still clasped in front and head bent low, O'Loobera put forth his right foot and steered his course across the carpet like a man balancing on a tight-rope, the Chevalier O'Dowla following in his wake. Kneeling on both knees at the archbishop's feet, Mr. O'Loobera, M.P., took hold of "his Grace's" hand, and fervently kissed the amethyst in the archbishop's ring. John O'Dowla simultaneously dropped on his knees behind O'Loobera, and joined his hands in an attitude of prayer. When Mr. O'Loobera had paid homage he retired to make way for Chevalier O'Dowla, M.P., who tendered his adoration in the same way. Mr. O'Doolahan, M.P., holding his knife aloft in his left hand and his fork in his right, was staring at the tableau, while the waiter and the boots could not repress a smile from their coign of 'vantage in the rear.

"Ah, is that Mr. O'Loobera, M.P.?" said the duke of the Church. "I did not know you at first, for, I'm very sorry to say, me sight isn't what it used to be. How are you, Mr. O'Loobera, and who's this friend of yours, tell me?"

"This gentleman, your Gress," exclaimed O'Loobera, stepping forward, and waving his hand towards O'Dowla, "is my colleague, the Chevalier John O'Dowla, M.P., recently elected for Gallowglass. With your Gress's pawmission, I present the Chevalier to your Gress." O'Loobera stepped backwards, leaving the carpet clear between his Grace and O'Dowla.

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT DOING HOMAGE

"Kneeling on both knees at the Archbishop's feet, Mr. O'Loobera, M.P., took hold of 'His Grace's' hand and fervently kissed the amethyst in the Archbishop's ring. Chevalier O'Dowla, M.P., simultaneously dropped on his knees behind O'Loobera and joined his hands in an attitude of prayer."—p. 472.

Chevalier O'Dowla, M.P., dropped down on his knees again.

"Get up, Chevalier O'Dowla, get up, an' come over till I shake hands with you. Sure, I'm always glad to see any of our patriotic Members o' Parliament. Allow me to congratulate you upon the high honour bestowed on you by the priests and people of heroic Gallowglass. Long may you live to enjoy it and to serve our country. Don't let me keep ye from yeer breakfast now. We'll have more time for conversation about politics, may be, on the way to Lundun." The Archbishop resumed his attack vigorously upon the crisp Limerick ham and poached eggs, and the Members went off to a table near Mr. O'Doolahan's, where breakfast awaited them.

"Ha, Maurice, you gave us the slip. You must have come by the same train as ourselves," said O'Loobera brusquely to his brother Member.

"I s'pose I did, but I didn't see ye," said Mr. O'Doolahan. "How d'ye do, Mr. O'Dowla, or Shevleer, as I ought to say now, I congratulate you on yurr election."

"Very well, Maurice," replied O'Loobera, "it wasn't exactly sociable, but never mind, ne' mind! O'Dulla, you know O'Doolahan, the strong temperance man of the Pawty, the promotor of Sunday Closing Bills and all to that, the deadly foe of the licensed trade."

"God sind you luck, Mr. Doolahan," said John O'Dowla, "I may say I'm a temperance man meself. I hold no licence to sell drink an' that's saying a good deal for a Gallowglass man. I was offered wan an' refused it."

The morning was singularly fine and the gentleness with which the steamer moved away from the North Wall amazed Chevalier O'Dowla, who expected to see as much weeping and confusion at her departure as at the sailing of an emigrant ship. Everything was a source of astonishment to him. Mr. O'Doolahan, M.P., was nowhere to be seen, though he had come aboard with his fellow-members, having gone to his berth immediately when he had made obeisance to the Archbishop of Tara and Lough Neagh, who stood airing himself on the after-deck. Nor did he join his fellow-members at any stage of the journey to London.

"Begor, Denis," O'Dowla said to O'Loobera, "Ireland is a grander country than ever I thought. Oh, look at that, look at that, nothing around Gallowglass is a patch on it!" They were gliding slowly down the river.

"Hush, O'Dulla," whispered O'Loobera. "You're on the sheekest boat and among the sheekest crowd o' swells in the world this instant—J.Ps., D.Ls., Knights, Baronets, Lords, Earls, even Marquises, nay Dukes, for isn't the Archbishop a duke? Let us be observant, but surely, surely, we won't expose ourselves. Whisht, for God's sake!" Then raising his voice in his best English accent, so that he could be heard all over the promenade deck: "There's his Grace. Let us see if he requires anything! Come, Chevalier O'Dulla! Let us make our bow."

O'Dowla found an unexpected difficulty in walking to meet the Archbishop. "This boat, as you call her, is rather unsteady, Denis. Are we in any immediate danger?" he called out.

O'Loobera glared at him and whispered, "Heavens above! How often must I tell you that you are surrounded by Swells, by Nobs of the first water, by aristocrats? Don't shame *me!* Don't shame yourself! Heisht a vyol! Remember that we're M.P.s!"

"Swells an' nobs o' the first water!" said O'Dowla, looking over the ship's side. "We're surrounded by water certainly," he muttered, as he staggered aft.

"Well, gentlemen, an' isn't it a glorious morning, to be sure?" said the Archbishop of Tara and Lough Neagh.

"Glorious, your Grace, glow-ri-us!" shouted O'Loobera, doffing his hat. O'Dowla uncovered also, and thought to himself, "'Tis to be hoped we may omit kneeling without committing sin, for I doubt if we could do it."

"Well, Chevalier O'Dowla," went on the Archbishop, smiling, "is this your first voyage across channel?"

"'Tis indeed, your Grace, an' if it was God's will I hope it may be the last!"

"What!" cried the prelate, laughing heartily and waving his hand, first southwards to the Dublin mountains, and then northwards to Howth, Ireland's Eye, and Lambay. "Did you ever see a grander sight than that? I hope it

is God's will that we'll all live to see it many a day yet to come."

"Never, your lordship—your Grace, I ax God's pardon—never! He, he, he! I'd hardly bleeve from the way I heard Ireland run down all me life, that there was so much comfort an' prosperity in the country, but seeing is believing. Grand, grand, entirely." And O'Dowla ran his eyes along the horizon and lifted up his hands as if about to pray.

"All we want, Mr. O'Loobera," said the Archbishop, "all we want is a truly genuine national literature to celebrate the glories of our country. An', of course, that can't be got without a Catholic University. Ah, if we could only get our young geniuses to cultivate a pure, pious, religious, national literature in a truly Catholic University, these very trees and hills would speak to us as we gaze on each an' every wan of them."

"I coincide with your Grace," cried Mr. O'Loobera, M.P. "If our young men could only be got to saturate themselves, sa-tu-rate themselves, a, with our national writers—to cultivate, in fact, a national literature, as your Grace put it—all would be well."

"He, he, he! I read many sorts o' literature in me day," said Chevalier O'Dowla, "except Scripture, which I leave in the hands o' me clergy, an'," bowing to the Archbishop, "the hire-ar-shee of the Church; but it always struck me, he, he, he, that literature was a very different thing from land, for wherever literature was best it got little or no cultivation. Sure, there's a man now, Shakespeare, that I read a dale of, an' I'm told that, as far as cultivation wint, the man got nayther ejucation from his parents—very differently I trated me sons—nor help from the people of his time. Another man too that I know since me shoes cost fourpence—Burns was his name, the man that said 'the best laid schaymes o' mice an' min gang aft agley'—he got no help neither be cultivation nor ejucation. An' sure, you'll see dunder-heads o' fellows that thousands was lost by their ejucation an' a body wouldn't be bothered ayther listenin' to 'em talkin' or readin' what they put on paper, and they don't seem to do much in the way of work aither."

"Very true, in a certain sense, Chevalier," said O'Loobera, observing a shadow on his Grace's brow, "but, you see, man, as his Grace puts it, we must cultivate our national literature, notwithstanding, do you understand?"

The Archbishop laughed. O'Dowla felt he had better not expatiate, so he said simply: "My experience, though very large in a way, is only th' opinion of a numble layman, to be sure, an' all I mint was that literachewre was a crop that grew without any top-dressing or manuring of any kind. I mane you couldn't make a man a great author by giving him a pension or odd jobs o' writin' like a handyman mason, nor you couldn't bind a gorsoon [2] to a pote like you could to a saddler! That's all."

"Mr. Fireframe must be very busy now?" said his Grace interrogatively and addressing O'Loobera, with a view to changing the conversation.

"Im-mensely, your Grace, tre-mendously!" responded O'Loobera, "I doubt if there's a man in this empire, in this world, in any age, ever had so much care and responsibility on him, as the Leader has this minute. In fact, your Gress, we're all weighed down with care. Even I myself, I assure your Gress, I haven't slept a wink for several nights, aha, not for several nights."

"I believe you," replied the Archbishop, "Fireframe is a wonderful man; indeed ye're all very good, God bless ye! Ye display a truly Catholic spirit in Parliament. Ah me, statesmanship is an intricate science. I suppose Fireframe has more on his mind than the Prime Minister, if it went to that, this minute!"

"A thousand times, your Grace, at least a thousand times," said O'Loobera eagerly. "The sleepless anxiety of that man is something marvellous, mawvellous!"

"Three o' the four archbishops think he's the greatest statesman living. One archbishop, I won't mention names," and the prelate smiled knowingly at O'Loobera, "an' some o' the bishops don't admire him so much, but all the rest of 'em are at one with the three archbishops on the point. I hope, however, I'll succeed in seeing him this evening, for I have rather particular business

back in Dublin the day after to-morrow. There's a bishop's father dead, 'tis a rare occurrence for a man to live to see his son a bishop, and I'm to preside at the High Mass!"

"Did yer Grace hear about the prospects my son has before him in the Church?" said O'Dowla, smiling.

"Indeed 'en I did," said the Archbishop, "and I hope you too may live to see yer son a bishop, Chevalier."

"Aw! Your Grace is sure to see Fireframe," said O'Loobera, reverting to politics. "I'll make it my most especial business to get an interview for you myself to-night at any hour suitable to your Grace. Did your Grace write to say your Grace was coming?"

"I did, but I got no reply!"

"Has your Grace, aw, seen Mulleady?"

"I have."

"Ah, then Fireframe didn't get the letter. Thousands of letters are constantly arriving for him, and a letter often gets mislaid. I'll make that all right, your Grace. Depend upon me. I'll see to it."

The Archbishop then left them, and the Members went below to rest; for the swell was becoming perceptible in Dublin Bay and the good ship, *Shamrock*,[3] was now far outside Poolbeg.

Chevalier O'Dowla was feeling quite comfortable as he reclined on the plush cushions and chuckled over the brilliancy of the adventures he was passing through. His thought ran on his wife: "She's clearing the breakfast away now!" he said; on the shop: "All the milk is disposed of, Mick is weighing sugar an' Jerry cutting tobacco;" on the farm: "The men are ploughing, the women topping turnips. May be Strawberry is after calving."

He was dozing, and would have gone off to sleep presently had not O'Loobera nudged him and said, "O'Dulla, have a nip o' something. Nothing like it to keep off sea-sickness. I nevaw get sick. Nevaw."

"Sick, what'd make you get sick?" exclaimed John O'Dowla in amazement.

O'Loobera smiled. "Take a bottle o' stout," he said,

"an' you'll pull through, you'll be awright. Will you? May I prescribe for you, Chevalier?"

"Very well, so be it, Denis!" said Chevalier O'Dowla.

O'Loobera drank a "large Irish," and John O'Dowla took the stout, after which the Chevalier's head reeled and he had to be escorted like an intoxicated person out of the saloon between the steward and the officious O'Loobera, to experience all the agonies of sea-sickness in a berth during the rest of the passage to Holyhead.

When they got inside the breakwater, O'Loobera said to him, "Now, old man, I warrant you're much better. We're inside. A nip o' brandy at the bar will just fix you now. Take me awm! We're inside. Do you hear? We're inside, I tell you!"

"I'm all inside out, God help us," said Chevalier O'Dowla, crawling up the gangway leaning on the arm of O'Loobera, but for whose support he could not have stood on his legs, and but for whose advice he would never have got sick.

"Don't disgrace us," whispered O'Loobera.

"Glory be to God!" said the Chevalier. "Let me put me right foot foremost on English soil." And, utterly careless about his trunk, he accompanied O'Loobera to the refreshment room.

The Archbishop of Tara and Lough Neagh was travelling first-class. Therefore, as the Members of Parliament were going third, further conversation with his Grace was impossible.

"Except for the windmills, Denis," exclaimed O'Dowla, as the train raced over the island of Anglesey, "there is no difference between this an' Ireland. The land is not extra good about here, an' if it was in Ireland, wouldn't be half so well tilled or so well fenced, an' the houses wouldn't be so good; but though I see a terrible lot o' sheep, horses, an' cattle in proportion to the quality o' the land, I don't see any better than me own, an' they's not much grass. An' look at the mountains——"

Bang—Crash—Thud! Crash—Thud—Bang! Thud—Bang—Crash! The train was in the tubular bridge over the Menai Straits.

"Denis O'Loobera! Where are you? God forgive me!" cried O'Dowla, jumping to his feet white with terror, "are we in a collision? An act o' contrition, oh my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, an' I detest me sins most sincerely, an' I firmly pur——"

The train emerged into the sunlight, and O'Dowla saw the trees and foliage flitting past on both sides, and the gleaming straits below with countless houses on the slopes, and he realised the import of the three words, "England, Home, and Beauty." Mr. O'Loobera was laughing boisterously, his mirth at O'Dowla's expense being shared by the other passengers in the compartment.

John O'Dowla resumed his seat, and received from his colleague a very high-flown description of the famous bridge through which they had passed, and a warning from him that they had still to cross the sister bridge over the Conway.

"I don't care now if there was forty of 'em," said O'Dowla, "but if I was aware that there was such a shasm before the train on the road to Lundun, I'd never lave Gallowglass. 'Twas very unforeseen o' you, Denis, not to acquaint me o' the matter beforehand."

"My deaw fellaw!" exclaimed O'Loobera, winking at the company, "wait till you're one twelve months in the House with the Irish Pawty and you won't say dammit to the noisiest earthquake! Pshaw, man!"

Neither the bustle at Euston on their arrival, nor the traffic along Endsleigh Gardens, Torrington Square, or Bow Street, came up to O'Dowla's expectations; but the sparkling hansoms and the procession of 'buses in the Strand interested him immensely. The private hotel patronised by O'Loobera was in Romanx Street; but its place now knows it no more, for that thoroughfare has become a street of palaces, and does not contain a single specimen of the old boarding-houses.

"Lundun isn't that great city after all, Denis," O'Dowla was saying when the cab stopped at the hotel.

O'Loobera stared at him. "Great! Not a great city! O'Dulla, you know no more of it than the babe unborn. You're swirling in a vortex of humanity this instant!

Wait till you see the Strand to-morrow. This is the world's metropolis, man, the a-greatest, the a-wealthiest, the a-largest—in fact, it is a country covered with houses, palaces, temples, emporiums, and pagodas."

"I'd like to walk on a strand after tay," said Chevalier O'Dowla in a childish treble.

"Along the shore of silvaw-streaming Thames! Verra well," said O'Loobera in martial tones.

"They's a dale o' people here certainly, but sure they're all English, an' so much the worse for us," continued O'Dowla. "I'd rather have Gallowglass than it, so far as I see it yet. Sure, our flags are a lot better than these." And O'Dowla, stepping out of the cab, stamped about to test the solidity of the pavement. "An' our own gas-lamps," he went on, "are better kept, and set closer together by far. They's better houses in the Main Street o' Gallowglass than there is here."

"But this is only a by-street, man; a lane-way. Wait till you see Cheapside, Regent Street, Oxford Street, and Piccadilly, the great squares, the pulses and arteries of the earth, of old Terra, of the commercial Cosmos!"

"A lane-way!" cried Chevalier O'Dowla. "Why did you come to a lane-way to sleep? Lave us go to the Main Street o' Lundun, and stay there like respectable people. Sure, I live in the Main Street at home, an' I'd like to do the same here. Do, Dennis, come, in God's name! Especially as 'tis a cheap side."

"O'Dulla," said O'Loobera, "gi' me half-a-crown; I have no change. I'll discuss these matters with you later on.

Chevalier O'Dowla, M.P., slowly counted out five six-pences into O'Loobera's hand, for he had brought a whole pocketful of small silver coins.

The cries in the street puzzled O'Dowla. "What's that fella callin' out 'Pie-paw-shawl' for? 'Winner!' 'Ex-tree, shawl!' That's quare gibberish. Shawl! The demand for shawls must be very brisk. What's that man up at th' end o' the street on the coach bawlin' out 'Penny, Benxity! Benk!' an' th' other bawlin' out 'Elephant,' an' 'Pool Street'? There's 'Penny all the way,' an' you were fool enough to pay half-a-crown!"

"O'Dulla, you know nothing! Come inside, Chevalier. Let us refresh the inner man."

"I know nothing, maybe, Denis, but I can see that a rollin' stone gathers no moss. If I was at home to-day, I wouldn't be after spendin' wan single penny; an' look at me now; look at the two of us—how much are we out o' pocket?"

"Hush, O'Dulla!—what will you have to eat? or, shall you wait till we get down to the House?"

"I'm hungry, Denis. 'Twas a long day."

They found the coffee-room vacant and dingy, showing no preparations for food. O'Dowla sat on a chair which creaked and trembled under his weight as if begging him not to sit on it.

"I sees nothing about this room any more than any room in Gallowglass, but, on the contrary, less—" O'Dowla was saying, when the porter entered coatless and collarless, wearing a vest with black calico sleeves.

"Jew ring, suh?" he asked, addressing O'Loobera.

"Yes, George; we a-want some tea."

"Thank you, suh. Will you 'ave hanythink with it?"

"Wov you got?" said O'Loobera, more Cockney than the Cockneys themselves.

"Stike, chop, fish, 'am an' heggs, rashaws—hanythink you like, thank you."

"O'Dulla, old man, what shall you have?" said O'Loobera.

"Well, Denis, if 'tis convaynient to the young man, I'll have a cup o' tay with a drop o' fresh crame an' two soft-boiled fresh eggs, duck eggs, if they're there, a penny bun, an' about half a quarter of a pound o' salt butter, an'——"

"Enough, enough, enough!" cried O'Loobera, who walked across to the porter and gave him the order.

"O'Dulla," said O'Loobera, returning, "'twill be many, many years before the Pawty can entrust you with a diplomatic mission, or put you up to move the second reading of a Bill!"

When the tea was brought in Mr. O'Loobera took the chair at the head of the table. Raising the dish-cover, a thick steak was discovered reposing on a bed of chipped

potatoes, at which Mr. O'Loobera said: "Haw, the roast beef of Old England, bay Jove, an' the spuds of Ould Ireland!"

John O'Dowla did not rise from his chair to go to the table, but brought the chair over with him attached to his person. "That was a clane colleen dass[5] that brought in the things," he said. "She looked to be about twenty-five. I'd say be her language she was a foreigner."

"A Cockney, O'Dulla," corrected Mr. O'Loobera, "a Lendener. In Lehenden town of high renown!"

O'Dowla looked into the milk ewer. "That's not crame," he said. He lifted the vessel to his lips. "No, nor 'tisn't milk ayther. I'll not drink it. An' see, them aren't duck eggs! but hin eggs 'll do as well." He broke one of the eggs with his spoon, looked into it, looked at O'Loobera, and pushed back his chair from the table.[6]

"What's the matter, old man?" cried his friend.

"Nothing, oh, nothing, only that I'll ate nothing on that table. You may call in the young man again as fast as you like. Get out our things again an' let us go to Cheap Side or Rayjint Street, or whatever they call the Main Street in Lundun. Do, Denis, be said be me. See, I'm older than you an' I'm for your good."

"Sh!" hissed O'Loobera. "For God's sake, hush! When I've finished this steak, we'll go down to a sheek restaurant in the Strand, an' you can have a good feed, on our way to the House. Remember the honour of the Pawty. You should show good form! Fawm, do you see? Bear and forbear, O'Dulla, bear and forbear."

O'Dowla thought of Julia's advice to him when parting, and, determined to master his rising wrath, walked across to the window and looked out on the dingy street, where he saw the words "Private Hotel" printed on every fanlight in view.

"Private Hotel," muttered the Chevalier. "Blee me, if the hotel was any good, 'tisn't private they'd be keepin' it. A private hotel can't be any great shakes, as sure as my name is John O'Dowla!"

"Dint you friend like 'is tea?" asked the girl, addressing O'Loobera, when she came in to remove the things.

"My friend, the Chevalier, Maud, is not, ha-ha-ha-ha, quite at home in Lenden yet. Ha, ha, ha! We'll improve his appetite later on, Maud, shan't we?"

"Ow, Chevalier! I 'eard 'im sing 'My Old Dutch' few nights ago!" exclaimed Maud, flouncing around the table as she removed the crockery; and, addressing O'Dowla, she said, "You're doing a turn off the stage, I expect. I 'eard you last Sat'day at Peckham. Thank you."

O'Loobera burst forth into a roar of laughter. "Oh no, Maud, this is not the Chevalier of the Music Halls.[7] This is Chevalier O'Dowla, M.P., of the Holy Roman Empire, Knight of the Shire, and so forth. Ha, ha!"

"Me appetite is good enough, begonnies," said O'Dowla, in complete ignorance of the reference, "but, he, he, he, 'twould be a supernatural appetite that ud take sour milk and goggled eggs for tay!"

"Ow!" cried Maud, "dint you like you tea, then?"

"See here, me good girl," said Chevalier O'Dowla, approaching her and laying his hand on her shoulder in a fatherly way, "I wouldn't fire them eggs at me worst enemy, an' I doubt if one o' me calves ud drink the milk that's there in that yore. Come over to Ireland to us, an' see, we'll give you fine fresh creamy milk and good butter that'll put a blush on yer cheeks like a cabbage rose, ma colleen dhass croothen a mo!"[8]

"Thank you!" said Maud, backing off from O'Dowla, "you come from Hoireland! Is it across the wawta then?"

"What?" asked O'Dowla. "You needn't thank me."

"Hoireland, dint you say Hoireland? Thank you."

"Ireland, I said, girrl! D'ye mane to say you're so unejucated as not to know where it is?"

"Um shaw ri don't know wayre Hoireland is. Is it hin London? You tell me. Thank you."

"He, he, he!" laughed O'Dowla. "Glory be to God! See! There isn't a barefooted urchin in Gallowglass but knows more about geography than you do. Where in the world do you come from with yer 'Thank you'?"

"I? Thank you. Wy Catford wy! Know it?"

"Cat-ford!" cried O'Dowla. "Eh, then, I must admit I don't. What continent is it in, girrl?"

"Thank you. Dunnore it? Well, then, you more hignorant 'n me!" said Maud, bouncing out of the room.

Mr. O'Loobera, who had been engaged before the mirror in arranging his moustache to martial ferocity, and adjusting his collar, shirt-front, and tie, said: "O'Dulla, those Cockney gulls awe the sheekest heifers on earth, specially th' East-enders. That gull, though she's not able to spell cat, knows more about life, real life, than all the savants in the French Academy. Come, O'Dulla! To the House! Till I introjuice you to the Mother o' Parliaments an' the first assembly of gentlemen in the world."

"Aren't you going to get something to ate first?" expostulated the Chevalier.

"Oh, yes. We'll go into—let me see, what would you say to Gatti's? It's on our way, and everything first-class, one of the world's greatest feeding houses."

"'Tis little I'll ate, but I want that little ateable!" said O'Dowla, and they turned into the Strand.

"How is it all these people are coming against us?" O'Dowla shouted to O'Loobera. "Is there a fire up street? There's nobody walking our way. These cawbogues are jostlin' me. We're like Gallowglass Protestants fighting their way to church against the stream o' people going to Mass."

O'Loobera gave him his arm, and the pair proceeded towards Charing Cross at a leisurely pace.

"Denis," asked O'Dowla again, "why are all the people coming against us?"

O'Loobera assured him that there were quite as many walking with them as against them, but O'Dowla remained incredulous, and besought O'Loobera to walk back towards their hotel so that he might convince himself.

"Eh, then, 'tis true for you!" said O'Dowla, open-mouthed with surprise. "They's far more people here now than on the Main Street of Gallowglass on a fair day—more, for the people here arn't sprawlin' about an' loafin' an' standin' an' gapin', but aitch an' every wan runnin' about his own business! Hallo, can I blee me eyes—is this Fireframe?"

"It is," said O'Loobera solemnly; "restrain yourself,

now, O'Dulla. Don't you accost Fireframe, mind, unless he speaks to you!" [9]

It really was Mr. Fireframe, dressed in a grey tweed morning coat, black trousers, and a brown felt hat. He was about twenty paces distant when descried by the peering eyes of John O'Dowla, and was approaching with a firm and determined stride, looking fixedly eastward as if he had a point in view which he wanted to make without deviating a hair's breadth from the shortest route. He seemed oblivious of the crowds through which he was cleaving his way.

"Will he see us, I wonder?" asked O'Dowla under his breath.

"Sh! sh! man, sh!" said O'Loobera fiercely.

Mr. Fireframe approached, his eye still fixed on the distant east and, brushing against O'Dowla's arm, he passed his two colleagues as if they had no existence.

"I'd swear he looked at me," said O'Dowla. "Surely he can't have forgotten me so suddenly."

O'Loobera smiled as they strolled westward.

"If Fireframe would remember any of us, I think I'd be the one. He knows me six years, 'twas I won him his seat; but, O'Dulla, Fireframe has the weight of empire on him. He's thinking of things other than us. Ah, me! but cheer up, old man, here we are at Gatti's." Just then a hansom drew up beside them and a familiar voice cried:

"Mr. O'Loobera, a word with you!"

It was the Archbishop of Tara and Lough Neagh.

The two members doffed their hats reverentially, and O'Loobera leaned into the cab to converse with his Grace.

"I'm going down to the House now," said the prelate. "I have an appointment with Fireframe at eleven."

"Did you see himself?" asked O'Loobera.

"No," replied the Archbishop, "but I met his secretary at the Viaduct Hotel, where I'm staying, an' he said he is to meet a deputation from Belfast at eleven at the House, an' the secretary will get me an interview at the same time. 'Tis all arranged."

"Aw!" said O'Loobera. "The Belfast men have come over specially to see him, I suppose, your Grace?"

"Yes. They have a long-standing appointment with him! They were put off several times."

"Your Grace has no time to lose," said O'Loobera seriously. "It's now near the time. I trust your Grace may be successful. But, as I told you, the Chief has the weight of empire on him."

The cab drove off westward towards the Houses of Parliament, and our friends turned into Gatti's.

"Why didn't you tell his Grace that we saw Fireframe going up street now, away from the House of Commons?" asked O'Dowla.

"Hush, O'Dulla!" retorted O'Loobera; "when you know Fireframe as long as I do, you'll know that your business is to hear, see, and say nothing. *Audi, vide, tace!* Neither the Belfast men nor the Archbishop will meet Fireframe this night! If they do, I'm a Dutchman. But that's a Pawty secret, remember, do y' understand?"

"Then, in that case," exclaimed O'Dowla, "I won't see him meself either to have an opportunity of a consultation——"

"Pshaw! O'Dulla, you are now wun of us, an' I may as well tell you in time that it is extremely improbable that you will ever again have a conversation with Fireframe. Tiddy-oo-tum-too. Ter-um-tum-tum!"

O'Dowla was silent and, during his hearty meal of sixteenpence worth of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, the Chevalier scarcely uttered a word except to accost the brown-eyed, black-haired Italian waiter twice.

"Bring us two small drops o' sperrits, young man," he said, taking advantage of O'Loobera's temporary absence.

"Speghitts!" exclaimed the waiter, struggling with the word as if it would choke him.

"Whisky!" roared O'Dowla.

"I-ghish O Scotch?" gurgled the waiter.

"Irish, to be sure! Don't ye see I'm not a Scotchman? Begor, you must be very ignorant." And O'Dowla glared passionately at the Italian, who returned scorn for scorn from his flashing eye and bristling moustache.

"Larrje O a schmall?"

"Half o' whisky, man. D'ye think I'm cracked Daly from Gallowglass?"

"Hachf-a-quartern! Vegha well. Two?"

"Quarter wan! He, he, he! Half was the smallest measure I ever heard of, an' I'll do with that! See, don't try any of your imposition on me, me good fellow, I'm a Member o' Parliament!"

The waiter vanished in the crowd, cursing under his breath, and presently returned with two large portions of whiskey in a tumbler, at the sight of which O'Dowla became furious, regarding it as a personal insult, an insinuation that he was such a confirmed toper as to take more than a glass of whisky at one drink. Mr. O'Loobera, M.P., fortunately returned in the nick of time and prevented what the newspapers call a *fracas*.

"Hush, Chevalier!" said O'Loobera to O'Dowla between his teeth; adding aloud to the waiter, "garçon, a toothpick, *s'il vous plait*."

O'Loobera was trembling with excitement. He gulped down his whiskey, and, having settled O'Dowla's bill and his own, strutted out of the restaurant, followed by his fellow-member. Not a word passed between the honourable gentlemen on the way from Gatti's to the House of Commons. O'Loobera felt that he had been unpardonably wronged. O'Dowla felt as if some one had been beating his head and face with a furze-bush.

When they reached the end of Parliament Street, the policeman stopped half-a-score of vehicles to let them pass, and saluted them deferentially.

"My God, is that the House o' Commons?" said O'Dowla, taking off his hat.

Mr. O'Loobera smiled graciously at the constable, and then said to O'Dowla: "Now, John O'Dowla, or Chevalier O'Dowla, I mean to be your friend, but, for Chr——, in the name of all you hold near an' dear to you, not another word except I ask you a question! Not a word, if it were to save you from eternal damnation!"

In a few minutes the pair found themselves in the inner lobby of the House of Commons, O'Dowla in a state of

stupefaction, O'Loobera buoyant and swelling with importance, like a thoroughbred waiting for the start.

John O'Dowla heard such exclamations from O'Loobera as: "How do, Marquis? Back from the hustings, and, I s'pose, the Continong!" "Aw, Majaw, how are you? Back to the fray!" "How dee do, General!" "Evening, Admiral!" "House sitting, Lord Beerly?" and so forth, as they elbowed their way through the throng.

O'Dowla's consternation made him compulsorily dumb, the pronunciation of each title being like the bursting of a bombshell.

A low-sized man with a very thin upright neck, a long white beard, very large black eyes and eyebrows, and a most heartbroken expression of countenance, now appeared, and was instantly seized upon by O'Loobera: "Aw, MacQuarter, yerra, is that yourself? Here, let me introjuice the new brother, the new colleague, a staunch Irishman, sound to the core, Chevalier O'Dulla, the famous patriot MacQuarter, one of the Pawty Whips! MacQuarter, the new knight O'Dulla. Love, a, wun another. Haw, haw, haw!"

"Good-evening an' good luck, Mr. MacQuarter!" said John O'Dowla, shaking the ancient patriot's hand.

"Has he been introjuiced? Isn't this the Member for Gallowglass?" exclaimed MacQuarter. "The Speaker isn't in the chair. We must put off his interoduction till to-morrow, but that needn't prevint him enterin' the House. Come between us, Chevalier O'Dowla. In we go. Aizy though, till I acquaints the doorkeeper."

The MacQuarter disappeared, and presently returned with the doorkeeper, who shook hands with Chevalier O'Dowla. Then the trio walked up the floor of what appeared to O'Dowla to be a Protestant church, and took their seats below the gangway on the Opposition side of the House. For a moment the chatter of voices was stilled, only, however, to be instantly renewed with greater vehemence than before. After a brief interval, at a sign from O'Loobera, the three left by a side door, and having traversed what seemed to John O'Dowla a labyrinth of corridors, they reached the smoking-room, where they were

at once surrounded by a group of Irish Members, all busily engaged in encouraging Irish manufacture by the consumption of Irish whisky and soda.

"That's the Chancellor o' th' Exchequer," whispered one of O'Dowla's new friends.

"There's th' Onder Secretarry for Home Affairs," cried another.

"Look at the great advocate o' Woman's Suffrage!"

"Watch at th' Attorney-Gineral for England."

"There's Misther Cass, the great, the great, a, begor I forget what! An' there's the President o' the Board o' Trade talkin' to Colonel King Harman." [10]

John O'Dowla was as bewildered as if each name were the explosion of an eighty-ton gun.

"Whisht! Here's his Grace of Tara and Lough Neagh!" exclaimed O'Loobera, quelling the running fire of his colleagues' exclamations. His Grace, very demure and apologetic in demeanour, was seen approaching through the fog of tobacco smoke, accompanied by Mr. M'Swillan, M.P., who kept saying in a loud voice, "Put on your hat, your Grace; keep on your Grace's hat," while his eyes rolled to the four points of the compass endeavouring to see if he was being observed by all observers.

"I never saw a priest, let alone a bishop—I mane an archbishop—in a public-house before," said O'Dowla, casting his eyes around on the array of intoxicating drinks which covered the marble-topped tables.

"For heaven's sake, hush, Chevalier, if you please," exclaimed Mr. MacQuarter. All the group arose; and, when his Grace was accommodated with a place in the centre, the Members resumed their seats.

"Ah, me!" sighed his Grace, mopping his forehead with his large pocket-handkerchief and holding his head very low, "it is hard work, indeed! I s'pose I must abandon all hope of seeing Mr. Fireframe to-night." [11]

Those were the days when the new Irish Party, under the iron rule of Mr. Fireframe, was the rising sun of the British House of Commons, before which Liberals and Conservatives bowed themselves down alternately in worship. It is true that Members of that Party, men like

the idiotic Mr. O'Martyr, like the talented but feather-headed Mr. O'Loobera, like the shrewd but ignorant and superstitious Chevalier O'Dowla, were as ready as ever to abase themselves before the sacrificing priests, and believed, against their own better judgment, in the priests' supernatural powers. But it is equally true that Mr. Fireframe, and many of his most important colleagues, absolutely refused to submit their policy to "the Church," as the priests call themselves; and that the Irish Chief kept his own counsel for several years, refusing to confide in the bishops or to accept any dictation from Maynooth. But it is matter of history now that, after Mr. Fireframe's fall, the Party which he had created became the inheritance of the priests, and has ever since been utterly suborned to sacerdotal uses.

[1] A district near St. Patrick's Cathedral, in the liberties of Dublin.

[2] Boy.

[3] The steadiest of the London and North-Western Railway Co.'s old paddle-boats.

[4] The beginning of the official Act of Contrition, which every Catholic knows by rote.

[5] Nice girl.

[6] These things occurred in one of the old-fashioned boarding-houses, which have long been abolished in the locality referred to. The London milk and eggs are now famous for their excellence.

[7] Mr. Chevalier, who subsequently became so famous as a music-hall singer, was just coming into favour with the Londoners.

[8] Pretty girl milking the cow. The name of a popular Irish song.

[9] The mysteriousness of the Irish Chief's private life, the peculiarities of his dress in the streets, his aloofness towards his colleagues, are all now matters of history.

[10] A well-known Irish Conservative M.P., afterwards appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Ireland, for the special assistance of Mr. A. J. Balfour, then Chief Secretary.

[11] The writer well remembers seeing the late Archbishop Croke, of Cashel, waiting for an entire evening in the House of Commons for an interview with Mr. Parnell, who passed the Archbishop more than once in the lobby and utterly ignored his existence.

CHAPTER XXXI

"Sweet Thames! run softly till I end my song."
—SPENSER.

IRISH Members of Parliament are not happy, as a rule, in their choice of London lodgings. Chevalier O'Dowla continually found fault with the arrangements at his private hotel; but, being an Irishman, he remained there.

"Why don't you lave the place?" asked Mr. MacQuarter.

"He he, he," was the reply, "the rogue I know is better than the rogue I don't know." And he stared witheringly at the servant and at the weekly bill, when it was presented with extras for refreshments supplied to fellow-countrymen when they came home in the small hours of the morning, exhausted from their Parliamentary labours.

On Sundays the Chevalier attended last mass at Maiden Lane chapel, after which he would walk up and down the Strand and Fleet Street, from Trafalgar Square to Ludgate Circus, the favourite haunt of the Irishman in London, sometimes invading Cockspur Street and Pall Mall, observing everything that was to be seen, and marvelling at the fewness of the mass-goers and wondering whether there was any parish priest in London who equalled Father O'Darrell in power and ability. When the licensed victuallers' premises opened at half-past twelve he invariably went into one of the respectable places and drank a bottle of ale. Like a giant refreshed, the Chevalier would then emerge, wiping his eyes and coughing, and hail the first 'bus that passed. Sometimes to Hammersmith or Putney; at other times to Camden Town or Cricklewood, again to Blackwall or Islington; anywhere in view of the London streets, which the exile

from Gallowglass never tired of beholding, anywhere to pass the lonely Sabbath day. After dinner the Chevalier never ventured far from home, strutting up and down the quiet bye-street from the Strand to the Embankment, questioning servants, porters, cabmen—everybody, in fact, whom he met.

"An' tell me, young woman," he would say to a maid-servant airing herself disconsolately at the door of a private hotel, chafing at her confinement on Sunday afternoon, "tell me, me good girl, who owns that big place across the street?"

Staring at him in perplexity the girl would laugh and exclaim: "'M show ri don't knowr! 'Oo do you think?" At which the Chevalier would chuckle, "He, he, he!" and pass on, to address the same query probably to a surly private hotel porter, smoking at an area railing.

O'Dowla would, perhaps, open the conversation with: "I beg your pardon, young man, he, he, he——"

And the porter would most probably interrupt him with a cynical question: "Thank you, 'oor yer larfin' at?"

To which the Chevalier would make answer: "At me own folly, I s'pose, like every other fool. Pup, pup, pup! I want to ask y' a civil question, see, who owns them big concerrens over there across the street?"

"Big kunsens ovaw they! 'Ow der I know? D'yer think hime Lend'n drecktry? Wish I'd nev set heyes on them there big kunsens. I knows nothink abaat 'em, thank you." And the surly porter would turn down the area ladder and disappear into his den.

After a series of such chilling responses to his curious overtures, the Chevalier's spirits began to fail him, and, arguing upon false premises, he came to dislike the Londoners. He had been a man of comparatively broad-minded views before he left Ireland, but the uncommunicativeness of the few specimens of the lower-class English whom he met made him bitterly patriotic, and bound him all the faster to Mr. Fireframe, who was the embodiment of everything anti-British. A party of northern Englishmen also, whom he chanced to meet at the hotel, and whose mannerisms effectually concealed their excellent qualities

from the Irishman, helped to give O'Dowla a mistaken opinion of Englishmen in general. Instead of admiring the English for their industry, quietness, and self-respect, as he had been inclined to do at home, he now began to regard them as oppressors of his country, as stupid, sullen people who used the brains of the impulsive, warm-hearted, and talented Irish for their own advancement.

But the Chevalier's spirits generally rose on Sunday afternoons, when, having written his weekly letter to Gallowglass, some of his fellow-members would drop in to drink, smoke, and jest. Then it was that Mr. O'Loobera shone at his brightest, and carolled his loudest :—

"'Twas a cold winter's night, an' the wind it was snarling
As Barney walked over the hills to his darling,
A-an tapped at the window where Kathleen did lie.

. . . . . .

"'Arrah, Barney,' says she, as she spoke from the window,
'Tis whisky not love that's got into yer head;
What has a poor girl but her fame to defind her?
Arrah, Barney, have sense an' return to yer bed.'"

The tears never failed to well up in Chevalier O'Dowla's eyes when he heard O'Loobera belabouring this song; and the thought of Julia and of the scores of healthy, innocent, confiding girls at home in Gallowglass, girls whose chief acquaintanceship with vice is acquired in the confessional, and whose venial sins are mostly committed when their tongues wag flippantly, often profanely, in pitched battle with the "daltheens."

On Mondays John rose early and wandered into the Strand, looking at the 'buses, listening to the street cries, staring at the myriads of passers by, wondering how they lived and what they found to do, and admiring the patience and good humour with which all business was carried on.

Then he would stroll down to the House, swinging his umbrella or stick, buttoning and unbuttoning his coat, according as the dread of pickpockets or the desire for ventilation predominated. The policeman at the Westminster crossing knew him well, and would salute him as deferentially as if he were a cabinet minister. And he

used to feel quite elated in anticipation of the courtesy awaiting him at the end of Parliament Street, when for a moment the traffic of the city would be stopped for his greater convenience, and when the Saxon policemen, some of whom came from the barony of Killafastare, would bow before his high mightiness.

Then he would cross Palace Yard feeling like a hero; hang up his top-coat on his own peg, strut into the lobby, stare all round several times, speak to his acquaintances, and, after a friendly word with the doorkeeper, enter the House, to doze upon the soft benches for an hour while private business was being gone through; picking his teeth with a new white bone toothpick of which he was very proud, considering it a *recherché* article of toilet that reflected honour on its possessor, marking him out as a man of fashion who had discarded pins, penknives, matches and other low improvisations.

When at questions, the Speaker rose and called upon "Mr. O'Dowlar" in sharp, incisive tones, the Chevalier would rise in his place, take off his hat and say: "Mr. Speaker, I beg to ask question five hundred and fifty." Then some Member of the Government would get up and answer it, but O'Dowla rarely paid attention to the reply, for the questions he asked were seldom his own, being generally Party questions composed by Messrs. M'Swillan, M'Coratry, and O'Martyr, and occasionally by Mr. Fireframe, and put on the paper in John O'Dowla's name, and sometimes without his acquiescenee asked or given. The only question he ever put on his own initiative was the interrogatory drawn up by O'Pollards, the result of which was that the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary was ordered to prepare a list of all the summonses issued and the convictions obtained in Ireland at the last two general elections, and at all intervening bye-elections, for the offence with which Mr. O'Pollards had been charged.

When the bulk of the Members were at dinner in the evening, O'Dowla would sit quietly in the tea-room and drink two or three cups of nice tea, eat two boiled eggs and several rounds of buttered toast, the unvarying

freshness of the eggs being a source of unfeigned astonishment to him.

"Look here now," he once said to Mr. MacQuarter, "if they only could be induced to have beds in this House o' Commons, I know of no way or mains by which a man could live snugger or cheaper in London than here. Why, my goodness gracious, the breakfast, dinner, an' tay, an' bed in proportion, would come to less than what Mrs. Bosom charges!"

"'Twouldn't do to make it too comfortable for us, Chevalier, or we'd grow lukewarm in our agitation for Home Rule, you know," was the reply of the patriot.

One of the Conservative whips used to chaff the Chevalier in the lobby, for Irishmen were then courted by both Parties; and O'Dowla took a great liking to his banterer, not perceiving the jokes made at his own expense. Therefore it came to pass that the Member for Gallowglass took Lord Henry Valley into his confidence one night and spoke seriously about getting in the beds, and the rate at which living could then be had entirely in the House.

Lord Henry Valley entered into the idea with cordiality, and suggested that O'Dowlar, as he invariably called the Chevalier, should put a question to the Government on the point. He advised O'Dowla, meantime, to go into the figures carefully, and make out a tabulated statement as to the cost of the beds. Were they to be single or double?

"Oh, all single," interrupted John, seizing a point. "I wouldn't go so far as to ask 'em to lave the ladies in."

At which Lord Henry exploded with laughter; and, in an hour's time, all the wags in the House were holding their sides over the recital of Chevalier O'Dowla's proposal and the point at which he drew the line.

"Most of our wives have something to attend to at home, you know. Business must be looked after, so we can't bring all our lairs an' pennets with us," John O'Dowla had explained to Lord Henry, not quite understanding the laughter of his noble acquaintance; at which Lord Henry laughed more and more, crying, "Our lairs an' pennets, lairs an' pennets![1] Oh, I see, lairs an'——"

When he had done laughing he told John confidentially

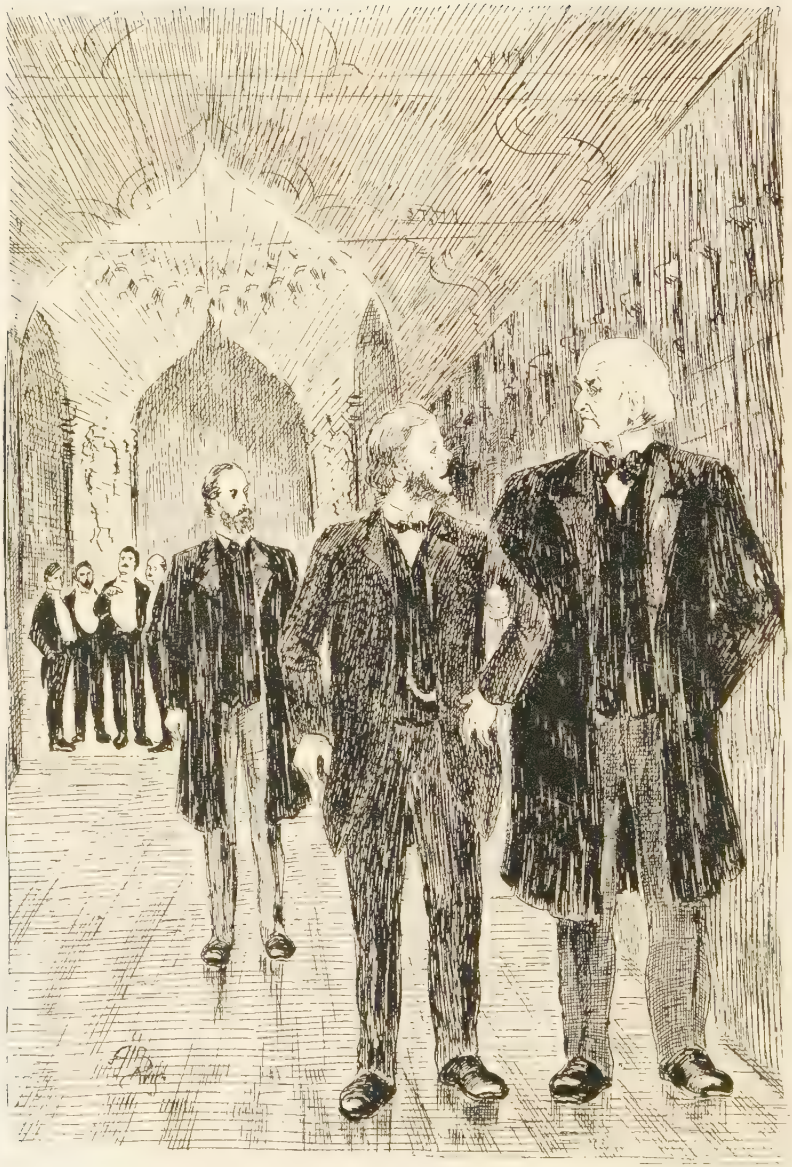
that the suggestion would be particularly *apropos* in an autumn session, and advised him to tabulate the cost of the single beds, $3\frac{1}{2}$ by $6\frac{1}{2}$, mattressed and pillowed for 670 members. Hadn't there better be a hundred four-foot-sixes for the fat men? Had he not better strike an estimate also for the chambermaids' wages; the cost of bedroom suites; allowing extra for cabinet ministers and front-bench Opposition men's rooms; carpets; new range of buildings, and so forth? Then he recommended O'Dowla to write a *précis* on such points as whether all the Liberals were to sleep in one wing, the Tories in another, the Irish in a third; or if the members were to sleep promiscuously as at a hotel?

John replied offhand that he thought "threen-a-kayla" would be the better arrangement. Lord Henry promised to look over John's figures, and draw up his question for him. In a word, Lord Henry Valley charmed Chevalier O'Dowla, M.P., and amused himself and his friends.

"Begonnies!" O'Dowla would say to himself, "'tis a pity there isn't more lords an' less low Englishmen in England. If there was, I'd like to be an Englishman meself."

But there were moments when John discovered that it was not all play to be an Irish member of Parliament, or, as Mr. O'Loobera put it, not all "dolsh far ninth."[2] One night he was kept in the House from three P.M. till nine A.M. the following morning, in the thick of a wrangle, started by Mr. Fireframe, and maintained by Messrs. O'Martyr, M'Swillan, M'Coratry, Greenpit, MacQuarter, and the others; marching in and out of the division lobbies till his legs were tired.

On other occasions, in the small hours of the morning, when nothing particular was being done in the House, and when John was dozing by the stove in the Members' smoke-room, Mr. Fireframe's secretary would rush in breathlessly like a man distraught, and, slapping O'Dowla on the thigh, hiss out the words: "Mr. Fireframe wants you in the Conference Room. Up at once!" And the Chief's secretary, casting round the smoke-room, like a collie collecting his owner's scattered sheep, would cry:



CHEVALIER O'DOWLA, M.P., AT ST. STEPHEN'S

"One eventful evening, while Scottish business was under discussion, Chevalier O'Dowla was strolling up and down the corridor, when his arm was quietly taken by someone coming up from behind."—p. 497.

"Hi, O'Loobera! Here, MacQuarter! O'Ryan, you sir, wake up! Quick, O'Duffy! Hurry up, O'Doolahan! The chief wants ye all in the Conference Room!"

Whereupon the flock would scurry upstairs amidst the winks and laughter of the Tories, leaving their drinks unfinished, or swallowing them hurriedly, almost choking themselves in their haste. Trooping into the Conference Room, they would find Mr. Fireframe in the chair, calm and relentless, urging a policy with mordant, philosophic eloquence. And when the contingent had arrived, some one would cry "Vote, vote!" and Mr. Fireframe's proposal would then be carried unanimously, for those who were inclined to differ from the Irish leader surrendered always to superior force.

But John O'Dowla quickly discovered that those who disagreed with the Chief were usually wrong, being either feather-headed simpletons drunk with popularity, or intriguers who represented self-seeking cliques, frequently henchmen of the priests, men of small hearts and petty ideas.

One eventful evening, while Scottish business was under discussion, Chevalier O'Dowla was strolling up and down the corridor, when his arm was quietly taken by some one coming up from behind. Turning round, O'Dowla almost fainted when he found himself hobnobbing with the great Liberal leader, a man of noble mien, whose intellectual face was illuminated by piercing eyes, and crowned by a lofty forehead; and whose presence cowed every member in the House except Mr. Fireframe; and whose voice was the signal for letting loose all the political passions collected together under the roof of St. Stephen's—arousing enthusiastic respect and love on the one hand; hate, fear, contempt, rage, and rowdyism on the other.

"Mr. Chevalier O'Dowler, I believe, membaw for Gallowglass?" said the great man, with an enlivening smile which set John at rest.

"That's me name, your honour, he, he, he, and if you'll allow me to make so bold, I'm a proud man to live to see the day when the greatest statesman of our time leant upon me arum."

This occurrence, perhaps, marks the beginning of that process of "sapping and undermining the integrity of the Irish Party," so bitterly complained off by Mr. Fireframe in after years.[3]

The Liberal statesman smiled, bowed, and withdrew his arm. "I wish Ireland God-speed, Mr. O'Dowler," he said. "There is no country I love more disinterestedly, no people I more cordially admire. I drove through Gallowglass once——"

"Oh, my gracious goodness me!" cried John O'Dowla, "I never knew it; was it whin the Queen was in Cove?"

"Soon after, either after or before. But in political matters, Mr. O'Dowler, reverting to Ireland, the question of the validity of Irish demands might seem to be of limited interest if it were only to be treated by the amount of any immediate practical and external consequences likely to follow upon any discussion or decision that might now be taken in respect to it."

"Why then, sir?" said O'Dowla, with awestruck seriousness.

"Yes," continued the statesman; "for the people of the United Kingdom, numbering between thirty and forty millions, nearer to forty, the whole subject is one of settled solidity, while there remains a sentiment of increased and increasing friendliness towards the Irish demand; but no question of separation is likely at present to arise, while happily no system of constraint, of persecution, exists to be a blister on our mutual relations in the Empire which, from its magnitude and the close issue of its organisation, overshadows all Western civilisation."

While this sentiment was being delivered they had traversed the corridor twice, and John felt like a man taking an electric shock for the first time. He replied as follows: "Eh, then, yer honour, I agree with you. If you'd bring in a bill, sir, compelling all the Irish landlords to sell to the tenants at a sliding scale of from ten to twenty years' purchase according to value, the tenants would find the money quick enough, and, see, between you an' me, you'd never again be bothered with Ireland. Also exclude lawyers from Parliament——

"This is not the plan," interposed the great Liberal leader, "and I am not the proper organ for exposition in detail; but I may mention the widespread depression of agricultural interests, the insufficient exhibition of the person and work of the sovereign, the coldness and deadness, as well as the infrequency of public authoritative expressions of sympathy, the relegation of the Irish question to impoverished ideas, to the plea of one (though, doubtless, an important one) among its occasional incidents, the gradual effacement in Ireland of loyalty to the Empire from personal and daily life— Thank you, good evening!"

And the eminent statesman turned quickly into the library, leaving his sentence unfinished. Taken aback at the great man's sudden departure, O'Dowla turned round, and was astonished to see Mr. Fireframe coming up the corridor; and, without knowing why, John felt guilty and abashed. Mr. Fireframe had not spoken to O'Dowla since the memorable Sunday at Caherconlish, and the Chevalier had begun to think that his Chief had utterly forgotten him. He was, therefore, startled at hearing himself thus addressed: "O'Dowla, what was that old man saying to you just now?"

John O'Dowla was unable to answer the question, for he could only recollect that the Liberal statesman had been saying something which boomed and buzzed in his ears. But, looking up at Mr. Fireframe with a puzzled expression on his face, O'Dowla said candidly: "Begor, I couldn't tell you, sir!"

Mr. Fireframe smiled coldly and walked off.

John O'Dowla felt humiliated by the demeanour of his Chief; but he felt sorer still when, at a Party meeting that night, he was censured for holding private converse with the Saxon enemy, and a bye-law was passed forbidding all such intercourse in future on the part of the Irish Members.

Wednesday being set apart for the consideration of Bills introduced by private members, John O'Dowla frequently found himself interested in the business on that day.

On one particular Wednesday, Mr. O'Martyr happened to

have charge of a Bill which appeared as first order on the paper, and on the back of which, to the Chevalier's delight, the name of *John O'Dowla* appeared as one of the members introducing the measure. The subject of the Bill is immaterial. It would give Messrs. O'Martyr, M'Coratry, M'Swillan, and other orators an opportunity for making long speeches to be reported *verbatim* in the *Hero's Journal*, and thereby achieve the desired end.

Mr. O'Martyr had moved the second reading of the Bill in a frothy harangue, five columns long. Mr. M'Swillan was to have seconded the motion; but, when O'Martyr sat down, that patriot was not in the House, and for a moment there was an embarrassing hiatus in the proceedings. John O'Dowla happened to be sitting close to O'Martyr, and was taken aback when that orator fiercely commanded him to speak: "O'Dowla, get up an' take off your hat an' say, 'Mr. Speaker, I beg to second the motion before the House,' an' say a few words about the Bill for quarter or half-an-hour."

John O'Dowla stood up, and for the first time enjoyed the exciting sensation of catching the Speaker's eye.

"Mr. O'Dowler," said the Speaker austerely.

John smiled: "He, he, he! Mr. Speaker——"

"Order, order!" snapped the Speaker.

John looked serious: "Mr. Speaker, it was another, he, he, he! and I might say, a greater——"

"Order, order!" cried the Speaker, rising. "Does the Honourable Member second the motion before the House, that the Bill be now read a second time?"

"He, he, he, that's just what I was trying to explain, if the learned barrister would only——"

"Order, order!" cried the Speaker testily.

"Order, order!" cried the Members on the Government side of the House, which annoyed John very much. Glaring across the floor he saw members, old, middle-aged, and young, some with their hats on, others with their hats off, lying, squatting, and thrown on the benches in all varieties of undignified postures, but all apparently animated by a common desire to howl down the Member for Gallowglass. John's temper was never under perfect

control; and, while admitting the Speaker's right to reprove him, he failed to see the *locus standi* of the other Members, who held no position of authority, to call him to order.

Chevalier O'Dowla remained standing.

He should have resumed his seat to allow the Speaker to correct him. And Mr. O'Martyr, who sat next to him, well knew the regular procedure; but, anxious for a scene, he gave no instructions to his friend. John O'Dowla, now conscious of the support of a score of his colleagues, who had foregathered on hearing the uproar, shouted at the hooters, paying them back with interest in their own coin. Repeating an ejaculation which he had heard Mr. Fireframe use with impunity more than once, during a disturbance, the Chevalier shrieked out sarcastically: "Look at those English beggars!" Proud of his display of courage, he went on: "Look at the grampuses; there isn't a dacint man amongst 'em, the swill——"

But the uproar was quelled by the Speaker, who, quivering with passion, addressed O'Dowla: "I call upon the Honourable Member for Gallowglass to resume his seat!"

"Name! name!" yelled the Members on the Government side of the House.

"Order, order!" cried the Speaker, who continued: "if the Honourable Member for Gallowglass desires to second the motion moved by the Honourable Member for Maamtrucknagh, he must say so; and if he desires to speak, he must confine himself to the contents of the Bill before the House."

"Very well, sir. I beg, he, he, he. to second the motion that the Bill be now read a second time, an' in doing so I only wish it was a Bill for the abolition of all income tax, dog tax, charges for cashing Irish bank-notes, duties on spirits, beer, and wine, railway fares, wires and postage, and so forth at present paid by Irish Members of Parliament while in attendance at Westminster, and that it included a clause for the exclusion of lawyers from Parliament."

"Order, order!" interrupted the Speaker. "The Honour-

able Member is travelling beyond the scope of the measure before the House."

John felt in high spirits that morning, in consequence of a letter received from Mrs. O'Dowla, informing him that business was flourishing. Therefore he bore up under the Speaker's reprimand, and went on to say: "Sir, there is no gentleman living for whose advice I have a greater regard than your own, an' I'm sure you must be aware of what heavy expenses we're put to coming over here——"

"Stay at home!" yelled a youthful Member on the opposite side of the House.

"Shut up, you young scamp!" hotly retorted Chevalier O'Dowla.

"Name! name!" shrieked the crowd of Members.

"Order, order!" cried the Speaker.

"I rise to a point of awda," said a Member for a Midland constituency. "Mist Speakaw, suh, riz a memba rof this 'ouse in awda rin callin' anothaw ronn'rable membaw ra scamp? I 'erd the word myself."

"Is that young chap in order in tellin' a man o' my age an' responsibility to stay at home?" cried O'Dowla.

"Order, order!" said the Speaker. "Did the Honourable Member for Gallowglass use the unparliamentary expression complained of?"

"I did, yer worship."

"Does the Honourable Member desire to withdraw the expression?"

"Withdraw, O'Dowla!" whispered O'Martyr.

"I withdraw, sir. I'm sorry if I spoke in any way rude, or in any way me daughter might object to, for she——"

"The Honourable Member withdraws!" said the Speaker, dropping into his chair and stifling a smile.

Then John O'Dowla, finding himself in possession, and being urged on by Mr. O'Martyr, resumed his speech: "The taxes on us Irish Members in coming here to this House, where we don't want to come, are far too heavy, yer reverence (laughter). An' nothing at all is done by ye English, Scotch, an' Welsh members to make things aizy an' comfortable for us. Now, see, I have to live at a hotel, whereas if there was a hotel in the House, with a

sufficient number of beds (laughter)—'Tis no laughing matter; I'm after goin' into the business, as the noble lord over there knows, an' I find the cost of putting up six hunderd an' seventy beds, six feet an' a half be four——"[4]

"Order, order!" said the Speaker, while the whole House laughed, shrieked, hooted, whistled, and John O'Dowla sat down.

"The Honourable Member must confine himself to the scope of the Bill. He is travelling altogether outside it," said the Speaker austerely.

"Very well, sir," cried O'Dowla. "No offence to you, he, he, he, but in my opingun, anything useful that a man says is out of order here. He can talk nothing but bosh, I believe, if he wants to be in order!"

Again the uproar became deafening. Mr. Fireframe himself was present, and almost the entire Irish contingent rallied proudly round Chevalier O'Dowla, cheering their loudest and shrillest.

Mr. Fireframe rose, placid as a statue, and immediately the multitude was silent.

"I rise to order, sir," said the Irish Chief, and the Speaker listened intently. "My honourable friend is a novice in this House, and I ask whether it is in order for Members opposite to annoy him by offensive cries, and insulting grimaces, while he is endeavouring to address this House for the first time. Is the constituency of Gallowglass to be disfranchised by conduct which is worthy, not of a body of gentlemen, but of a gang of cowardly English bullies?"

Cries of "Order, order," and "Withdraw."

The Liberal Leader then rose and said: "Sir, I did not overhear any objectionable remarks made, if any such were made, any remarks beneath or lowering to the dignity of this House. May I ask you, sir, if you heard any such words, to communicate their import to the House?"

"I caught nothing of the kind," said the Speaker; "but if the Honourable Member for Gallowglass desires to ex——"

Here the Speaker stopped and the entire House grew

still; for the Member for Gallowglass was seen to be gasping for breath, leaning against the back of the bench, holding in his hand an open telegram, just received from the messenger of the House, which contained the words: "*O'Dowla, House of Commons, London. Hugh is dead. Come home immediately. Ignatius.*"

When John O'Dowla found his voice, after the first fit of stupefaction was over, he shouted aloud in his grief and was led from the House in the supporting arms of O'Loobera and MacQuarter.

[1] *Lares et Penates.*

[2] *Dolce far niente.*

[3] This was before the general election of 1885, when the Liberal Leader was seriously endeavouring to understand the nature of the Irish demand.

[4] Speeches quite as ludicrous as Chevalier O'Dowla's have frequently been delivered by Irish members, but the newspapers seldom do justice to them. The author, sitting under the clock in the small hours of the morning, has more than once witnessed exhibitions of the most extravagant clowning, on the part of the Irish Members, in the House of Commons, the motive of which was to turn the proceedings of that venerable assembly into ridicule with a view to obtaining Home Rule.

CHAPTER XXXII

"Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life."

—LYCIDAS.

EVEN the assassination of Mr. Culvert did not produce such consternation in Gallowglass as the sudden death of Hugh O'Dowla. All business was more or less interrupted; every shopkeeper in the town felt as if he had met with a personal calamity; and the oldest inhabitant had never witnessed such universal public mourning in the Main Street, where day was turned into night by the closed blinds and shutters in all the shops.[1] Hugh O'Dowla had always been a favourite in the town, where he was admired for his good looks and generosity, and, since the death of Miss Penser, his career had been a theme of constant discussion. The townspeople gloried in the reports of his successes at Kilmoy, no less than in the exceptional prospects of promotion which were assured to him by his aunt's will.

Mrs. O'Dowla sat like a lunatic in her bedroom for hours after she had heard the dreadful news, unable to speak, unable even to cry. It was O'Pollards who had borne the evil tidings to Gallowglass. His son was a pupil at the diocesan seminary in Kilmoy, and, being a precocious cub, had sent a telegram to his father containing the bare words, "Hugh O'Dowla died to-day." O'Pollards told the news to Ignatius, and the young doctor went across to Canon O'Darrell, where he received confirmation of the report, the priest himself being in tears. When Ignatius found himself unable to restore his mother to her senses, he went to the Parochial House a second time and besought the pastor to pay a visit to Mrs. O'Dowla. Canon O'Darrell did so, and the priest's tears never

ceased to flow even when he emerged into the street, stared at by men and women, shouting and clapping their hands at the unusual spectacle of a weeping priest. Ignatius always vividly remembered the pastor's encounter with his mother. Mrs. O'Dowla had been sitting stupefied in her bedroom, apparently unable to recognise any one. Neither Ignatius, nor the clerks, nor the milkwomen, nor the maidservants; not even Mr. O'Pollards, nor Timmy the Coals, nor Mrs. Arnill, could elicit any intelligent response from the stricken mother who sat there before them, as if she were blind and deaf and dumb, all the ambitions of her life shattered, nothing more to be looked forward to but the open grave, into which, as she so frequently put it, she would follow her parents, and " all belonging to her."

The picture in the bedroom was a remarkable one, Mrs. O'Dowla sitting in an armchair, mute and *distraite*, surrounded by a group of sympathisers made up of outsiders and members of her own household. When the priest appeared at the door, he stared at her and then looked around at those present, all heads being bowed before his gaze.

" Bridget, my girl," exclaimed Canon O'Darrell in clear ringing tones, " I came to tell you about a vision I had last night. I saw your uncle Denis in his vestments, just as he used to be when I served mass for him long ago in Ballygrauver."

The group of people in the bedroom forgot all about Mrs. O'Dowla, and hung open-mouthed on the words of the Canon. Even Ignatius was arrested by the pastor's manner, for he had never before seen a priest at work at this branch of his business.

" I saw the Monsignor elevating the Host," continued Canon O'Darrell, and he raised his hands aloft and looked up at the ceiling as if the vision were being re-enacted before his eyes, " and I saw the altar-boy bending low behind him and striking the gong, and then the Monsignor elevated the chalice and the boy bowed low again; and I thought," here the tears rolled down the cheeks of the priest, " I thought the boy was more beautiful than any

angel, though I could not see his face. And then, when the elevation was all over, and the boy turned round as if to arrange the soutane over his slippers, I saw his face and it was the face of Hugh O'Dowla, who was become a saint of God and was serving his uncle's mass in Heaven."

"Glory be to God!" cried all present, including Mrs. O'Dowla, who was wide awake and crying more for joy, as it would appear, than for grief. Even Ignatius was affected by the contagion of delirium, and, seeing his mother restored to her senses, exclaimed, "Praise be to God!"

It was not easy to elicit the particulars of Hugh's death. It had been sudden, but there would be no inquest. The police had notified the coroner, and the coroner had gone straight to the bishop at Kilmoy; and the result was that no inquest was to be held, no autopsy was to be made. Hugh had been in his usual health at the mid-day dinner, but shortly afterwards he had been attacked by nausea and, in the violence of the vomiting, had burst a blood-vessel, for he had inherited weak lungs from the Pensers. The doctor had been summoned but could not arrest the flow of blood, and hæmorrhage was assigned as the cause of death. The young man's constitution had been worn out by overwork and want of exercise, and had broken under the strain. His mind too had been giving way in the hopeless endeavour to evolve truth, order, and wisdom from the tangled labyrinth of corrupt casuistry which he had been studying under the name of theology.

There was jubilation amongst the host of conditional legatees under Miss Penser's will, who would now receive their legacies long after they had given up the last vestige of hope of benefiting under the testament. No less than twenty different orders of priests and nuns thus profited by Hugh O'Dowla's death. From a pecuniary point of view the catastrophe made no difference to Canon O'Darrell; but it is only due to the pastor to say that he experienced more heartfelt grief at Hugh O'Dowla's death than he had ever known during his sacerdotal career.

Never had such an elaborate funeral been seen in Gallowglass. The first act in the celebration of the obsequies was

the departure of Timothy M'Climber's best hearse and four horses for Kilmoy to bring home the body. Every one in Gallowglass who possessed a horse or car of his own, or could procure a seat in a neighbour's car, went with the hearse, as they said, "to bring Hugh O'Dowla home," thinking nothing of the long journey of twenty miles. And, as the *cortège* wended its way through the country-side, continual additions were being made to its length; and the women by the roadside clapped their hands in wonder at beholding the empty hearse followed by such an enormous line of vehicles with two score of horsemen, headed by Roland Glenpower, bringing up the rear. All the shops in Kilmoy were shuttered as those in Gallowglass had been. High mass, celebrated by Canon O'Darrell, with Father Lawnavawla as deacon, Father Gubbraw as sub-deacon, and Doctor O'Keefe as master of ceremonies, was offered up in the cathedral. The bishop presided, and the assistant canons at the throne were Canon Brown, President of the Theological College, and Canon O'Grauver. All the senior students of the college stood within the choir wearing surplices, and the coffin containing the body was placed on a catafalque before the high altar, the cathedral being crowded almost to suffocation.

After mass, when the bishop and over fifty priests had taken luncheon at the college, the funeral procession was formed for the return journey to Gallowglass. The bishop's car, containing Dr. O'Grenaghan and his private chaplain, was given first place; Canon O'Darrell's car, in which sat the pastor and Father Lawnavawla, came second; the car of the President of the Theological College came third; and then followed over twenty other clerical cars; every priest wearing an ample sash of the finest snow-white cambric linen over his shoulders and a white linen band round his tall hat.

After the priests' cars came the wreath-covered coffin, which the Garekiln men insisted on carrying upon their shoulders for the first mile of the journey; but there were hundreds of other pedestrians all eager to be permitted to assist in bearing it. At length the coffin was placed in the hearse, which was decorated with white plumes, while the

drivers wore white calico hat-bands and ample sashes of the same material, and the four horses carried white plumes between their ears. Then came the chief mourners' carriage, in which sat Ignatius O'Dowla alone, his hat enveloped in black *crêpe*; and after that, in an interminable line, came the cars of the people, the accession of the Kilmoy contingent almost doubling the length of the *cortège*. The horsemen, as usual, brought up the rear of the procession, Roland Glenpower leading the squadron.

The O'Briles were there, Bugler driving, his eyes red and watery; Edward O'Brile weeping, and Thomas O'Brile silent and thoughtful. There was a great deal of noise and confusion, and collisions were frequent during the first stage of the journey, drivers and passengers having imbibed freely while waiting at Kilmoy, and few of the mourners having come provided with solid food. For years afterwards the publicans of Kilmoy remembered the day of Hugh O'Dowla's funeral as having been more profitable to them than a race-meeting, and all the licensed houses on the route home garnered considerable gleanings from the mournful event.

When the coffin had been placed in the hearse the bishop's horse broke into a fast trot, and the entire procession followed suit; but there was always an interval of a quarter of a mile between the last of the priests' cars and the hearse, for the clerics were anxious to get the business over so that they might enjoy the proverbial hospitality of Canon O'Darrell.

The Kilmoy contingent left the procession at the Half-Way House, the middle point of the road between Gallowglass and Kilmoy. But fresh arrivals from Gallowglass, Mahernacrow, Ballygrauver, Furzey Valley, Ballynastackeragh, and Neenawhoona more than supplied the place of the Kilmoy men. And when, at six o'clock in the afternoon, the funeral entered the Main Street of Gallowglass, covered with dust and at walking pace, it surpassed, for its length and magnificence, any display of popular mourning which the townspeople had ever witnessed.

The street was full of sightseers. Mrs. Arnill and half-a-dozen professional keeners from Mahernacrow met the

cortège at the entrance to the town; and, despite the expostulation of Sporeen, who furnished the mourning, and the threats of McClimber, who provided the hearse and carriages, and swore he would not allow "the funeral to be spoiled goin' through the Main Street o' Gallowglass, after all his trouble," the keeners ushered the memorable pageant into Gallowglass with a dirge of eulogy and sorrow which rent the heavens and re-echoed from end to end of the silent town. They had consulted Mrs. O'Dowla, they said, and she "had ordered them to keen her son." They ignored Ignatius's bribes and entreaties; and the bishop did not see his way to interfere.

Thus the sad procession passed by O'Brile's house, where Molly Carew saw it through her tears from the hall-door; thus it passed O'Dowla's house, where the mother was peeping under a bedroom blind at her boy's funeral, consoling herself for her loss by dwelling upon the vastness of the concourse assembled to pay the last honours to his remains.

The coffin was placed for the night in the nave of the new church, immediately in front of the altar-rails, being surrounded by lighted candles and covered with wreaths; and hundreds of people remained in the church keeping company with the dead. Meantime a great sacerdotal banquet was given at the Parochial House, at which the bishop and over fifty priests sat down to refresh themselves after their labours.

When the church was closed for the night, watch was kept through the small hours by a dozen women selected by Sporeen from over a hundred volunteers eager for the distinction.

Next day Chevalier O'Dowla, M.P., arrived home, and the last stages of the obsequies were proceeded with. High mass was celebrated at eleven o'clock, Canon O'Darrell being again the celebrant, with Doctor O'Keefe as deacon, and the President of the Diocesan Seminary as sub-deacon, Father Flauhool being the master of ceremonies. The bishop had not remained for this function, having departed for Kilmoy immediately after early breakfast. After mass, the funeral left Gallowglass for the

family burial-place at Kilderiheenbreeka, where Hugh had his encounter with the Valiants, traversing the road which had seemed such a *via dolorosa* to him the last time he had walked over it; and the *cortège* was almost as long as it had been on the journey from Kilmoy to Gallowglass. There was such a large number of priests assisting at the burial service that John O'Dowla and Ignatius were unable to get near the grave until the last moment, and over a thousand people were herded together amongst the tombs, kneeling, standing, and sitting on the long grass of the ill-kept cemetery. When the intricate Latin service was over, the people said a short prayer for themselves, in English or Irish, and dispersed to their homes, while the priests again betook themselves to the hospitable board of Canon O'Darrell.[2]

Sporeen met John O'Dowla and Ignatius at the graveyard gate, and said: "See here, gintlemin, God be merciful to him! He's in heaven as sure as we're here! But ye can turn around an' have it to say for the rest o' yeer lives that ye're after havin' the grandest funeral in yeer family that was ever seen in Gallowglass."

"I'd die happy if I thought I was goin' to have quarter as good a funeral as it was. Wouldn't I, what?" put in O'Pollards. "That I mightn't if I wouldn't!"

Bill Arnill strode up with tears in his eyes and, extending his rough right hand, clasped the hand of his master, and said: "God rest his sowl, sir! You needn't have no doubt but the biy is safe in heaven. All the same, may God help yerself an' the misthuss to-night!"

"'Twill come very heavy on you, John, d'ye see?" said Mr. Wegless. "But, sure, money couldn't be better expinded both for this world an' for the next, than in givin' those b'longing to us, d'ye see, a good funelar."

"Thrue for you," said Maurice Sawnuch; "but, case in point, case in point, I'd like to know what the bishop an' all them priests 'll have to be paid. 'Twill be something purty an' I'd rather the Chevalier here ud be landing it out than meself. Two high masses aren't to be had athout money." This speech was meant to be flattering and was so taken by John O'Dowla.

"Pup, pup, pup!" exclaimed Chevalier O'Dowla, wiping his eyes which were red with weeping.

"I congratulate you, sir, on the magnificent sane you created in Parliament th' other day," said Dick Quisk, pushing himself forward. "'Twas in the *Hayro's Journal* yesterday in full. Begor, 'twas tin or eleven columns long, 'twas a credit to the country. Everybody said so at the forge. God be merciful to the dead."

"An' some people says that John O'Dowla is a near[3] man," put in McClimber, proudly looking at his own hearse. "I'd put the——"

"Near, skeerd, what? 'Tis superaboundin' with lavish ginerosity he is, what?" exclaimed O'Pollards.

"Lave ye be aisy now," went on McClimber. "'Tis what I was goin' to say is that I'd put the five parishes o' Furzey Valley, Mahernacrow, Ballygrauver, Neenawhoona, an' Ballyslochter, besides Gallowglass itself, to the pin o' their collar to produce a funeral that could come athin a hunderd mile of it!"

"I'd like wan o' ye to turn around," said Sporeen, "an' show me, 'tisn't wan, but any two or three funelars put together, these twinty years, that had as much *crêpe* an' linen served out at 'em as Hugh O'Dowla's had."

John O'Dowla invited Sporeen to take a seat in the chief-mourners' carriage, and, the young draper having gladly accepted the offer, the trio set off for Gallowglass. The carriage pulled up at O'Dowla's door, and the Chevalier stepped out amongst a crowd of beggars and idlers, who had assembled in anticipation of doles, or had come to gratify their morbid curiosity by observing the behaviour of the deceased's relatives.

"God be good an' merciful to yer son, Mr. O'Dowla!"

"God rest his sowl!"

"Yer boy is in heaven, sir!"

"He was the grandest young man that Gallowglass ever saw! God be merciful to him!"

"The town 'll never see Master Hugh's likes again, amossa! God reward him!"

And the keen was on the point of recommencing, but it was peremptorily suppressed by Ignatius and Sporeen.

JULIA O'DOWLA COMES HOME

"Glory be to God!" cried John O'Dowla, "He never takes anything from us without giving us back on the double. I lost me son, but I found me daughter to-day." p. 51.

John O'Dowla was weeping as he pushed his way to the door, expecting only to find his wife crying in the desolate house inside; when, to his astonishment, his daughter, Julia, in her nun's robes, the white veil covering her hair and streaming down over her shoulders, rushed out to meet him and clasped him round the neck. The Chevalier threw his arms round her waist, and grappled his beloved child to his breast as if "with hoops of steel."[4]

"Jule, my darling," he said, "I hope you're after lavin' that cursed convent, I beg God's pardon, that holy convent; but I always objected to it, you know——"

"I am, father," sobbed Julia, who was crying convulsively; "I came away in spite of them, and I'll never leave you again."

"Glory be to God!" cried John O'Dowla. "He never takes anything from us without giving us back on the double. I lost me son, but I found me daughter to-day. A daughter is a daughter for life, but a son is a son till he gets a wife! If they'd only exclude priests from God's parliament on earth, and let God talk to us for Himself, the world would be happier than it is."

"Thrue for ye, Shevleer!" said Sporeen.

O'Dowla recollected himself at the sound of the draper's voice and said: "Pup, pup, pup! Sporeen, I'm overcome to-day, so don't let what I said go any farther. A body says many things at times like this that they'd wish unsaid when they're in a calmer mood. What I meant to say was that if they'd only exclude lawyers from Parliament the natural kindness of man to man would be manifest in the laws."

Then O'Dowla shook hands with Sporeen, and, taking his daughter by the arm, walked into his house feeling himself a better man than he had been at any period of his life.

Never had Gallowglass experienced such a sensation as that afforded by the appearance of Miss Julia O'Dowla in the street in nun's costume. Amongst those who beheld her meeting with her father was Edward O'Brile, who stood sorrowfully watching O'Dowla's door where he had

so often waited for Hugh in the evenings. If Edward had admired Julia before her entrance into the convent, his respect for her now increased a thousandfold. He overheard her words to her father, and realised how the frost in her nature had been thawed. Though her young face was pale and thoughtful, her features looked more ethereally beautiful in the picturesque setting of bandeau, *guimpe*, and white veil, than they had ever appeared, even to Edward, when surmounted by the gaudiest *mélange* of millinery ever concocted in Gallowglass.

Roland Glenpower rode up the Main Street dust-covered, having ridden with some other horsemen at walking pace from Kilderiheenbreeka ; and, giving his hunter's reins to the Badger, who happened to be standing near O'Dowla's door, the Master of Hounds went into O'Dowla's.

" Cheer up, Bridget," he said to his cousin. " Aren't all belonging to us dead an' buried ? Begor, when I come to count up me friends when I'm ridin' all alone along the roads—an' frequently even, I assure ye, when I'm riding to hounds over a good country with no wan but the pack in sight—when I come to reckon up me friends, those I thought most highly of, I find the vast majority of 'em are dead. Where are all our fathers an' mothers that loved us better than all the world besides ? Where are the great men an' women of our youth ? Gone ! In heaven, let us hope, where we'll meet 'em, please God, when our time comes. I loved Hugh better than any o' me own children, God forgive me ; but I'll transfer me affections henceforth to Miss Julia here, who has proved herself a hero, or a heroine—I b'lieve that's the faymale of a hero, Ignatius ? Though an intense naturalist, I'm not sure about the point."

John O'Dowla and Mrs. O'Dowla were compelled to laugh, for Roland's appearance and gestures were droller than his speech ; and Julia said mildly, " I'll never speak hardly of you or any one else again, Roland ! "

" Stay for dinner with us in God's name, Roland," said John O'Dowla, applying a handkerchief to his eyes.

" 'Twill be an act o' charity for you to do so," added Mrs. O'Dowla, having recourse to her apron.

"Priest's money never brought any one good luck!" said the Chevalier mournfully.

"Shall I see the horse put up, Roland?" said Ignatius.

"Do, if you please, doctor," replied the Master of Hounds; and Mrs. O'Dowla placed the tray with decanters and glasses on the table before Roland for the thousandth time.

[1] Residents of Great Britain can scarcely realise the paralysis which overwhelms a country town in the South of Ireland when the death of an important and promising young man, like Hugh O'Dowla, suddenly takes place.

[2] Such funerals are common occurrences in Ireland, and constitute one of the most important features in the public life of the Catholics who are so neglectful of the living and so considerate to the dead.

[3] Penurious.

[4] Novices frequently leave the convent; but it is looked upon as a disgraceful thing to do so, and, unlike Julia O'Dowla, they are not always welcomed home by their parents.

CHAPTER XXXIII

"I will, therefore, that the younger women marry."—1 TIM. v. 14.

THERE were some unpleasant interviews with the Reverend Mother and Canon O'Darrell before the terms of Julia's abandonment of the conventual life were finally settled; but the Chevalier discharged all his obligations to the priests so liberally in connection with Hugh's funeral that the pastor could not cherish enmity against the family for long. His visits to the O'Dowlas were not so frequent as they used to be in the days before Miss Penser's death, when it was his interest to keep in close touch with the wealthy spinster's nearest relatives. But he called in to see his faithful client, Mrs. O'Dowla, once a month at least, and on such occasions he would regretfully comment upon the invariable absence of Miss Julia.

Since her escape from the convent, Julia O'Dowla had entertained feelings of the utmost repugnance not only to those religious observances in which she used to indulge formerly, but also towards priests and nuns in general, whose society she avoided as studiously as she had formerly courted it—a frame of mind which is rather the rule than the exception amongst girls who have tried the religious life and renounced it. Some acts which she had seen and conversations she had overheard in the convent, despite the strict guard usually maintained over the novices, had frightened and chilled her to the marrow of her bones. And whenever the name of a priest or a nun was now mentioned in her presence, the blood might be seen leaving her cheeks, while she squeezed up her prettily-rounded lips until her mouth became almost invisible. But she would say nothing on the subject.

For several months Julia could not appear in the Main Street without being stared at and subjected to very

unpleasant criticism. She dressed very plainly, and only appeared out of doors on Sundays, when she went to first mass with her mother. But when her beautiful fair hair had grown again, she used to walk out as far as Caherconlish in the evenings with her brother Ignatius; and the brother and sister were frequently accompanied by Norah O'Brile, to whom Ignatius had been for some time affianced. One evening in spring, when the trees were bursting into leaf and all the birds were singing, Edward O'Brile met the trio by accident and joined them at Ignatius's request. And when the path became narrow, the young doctor led the way with the beautiful Norah, and Edward found himself in company with Julia. They spoke a great deal about Hugh at first; but, afterwards, when they grew more accustomed to each other, their talk branched off into less personal subjects, and it amazed them both to discover how similar were their enthusiasms and abhorrences.

And all through that happy summer, except when it rained with exceptional vehemence, the two young couples, who now constituted the chief glory of Gallowglass, were to be seen setting out for their evening recreation along the shady road which led to Caherconlish. How heavenly were the moments they spent in the historic Castle Field, pacing beneath the elms long after the sun had set, and even when the moon was peeping down on them through the network of foliage! How cheerfully the Oun-a-curra rippled as they crossed the plank foot-bridge behind the castle, laughing at their own reflections in their native stream, and enjoying that most tangible of all heavens, the external quietness and beauty of nature, coupled with the internal peace of conscience, the health of youth, and unclouded hope for the future.

A vacancy occurred in Gallowglass dispensary district, caused by the death of Dr. Bolton, and Ignatius O'Dowla became a candidate. He was opposed by a nephew of Canon O'Grauver's, and the bishop intervened in the contest by writing a testimonial in favour of Doctor O'Grauver, whose character and qualifications were immeasurably inferior to those of Ignatius O'Dowla. A hot

canvass was made, during which all the priests were on the side of O'Grauver. And Ignatius was very roughly handled, being stigmatised by Doctor O'Keefe, as "an *alumnus* of the godless Queen's College of Cork, which was under the ban of the hierarchy, a man whom no practical Catholic could call to the bedside of his family."

John O'Dowla invoked the assistance of Canon O'Darrell, but the pastor assured him that he "dare not interfare or interfere" in face of the bishop's letter supporting young O'Grauver.

The contest took place about the date of the first Home Rule Bill, during the discussion of which John O'Dowla had distinguished himself more than once, as well by the regularity of his attendance as by some short, sensible speeches which were fully reported in *The Hero's Journal*. Feeling that he had a claim on the Party, the Chevalier invoked the aid of Mr. Fireframe, who wrote a letter in which he expressed "a hope and belief that the son of the able and patriotic Member for Gallowglass would be triumphantly elected to the post which he was so eminently qualified to fill."

Ignatius O'Dowla was elected, being supported by all the Protestant members of the Dispensary Committee, as well as by the Nationalists. The first to congratulate him in public was his old schoolmaster, the rector of Gallowglass, who had always taken a deep interest in his welfare, and had at more than one emergency given the young man sensible advice when no guidance was to be had from any other quarter.

Soon afterwards Ignatius proposed in solemn form for Norah O'Brile, and a date was fixed for his marriage with the Belle of Gallowglass, whom he had wooed so decorously and won so deservedly. Thomas O'Brile was so pleased with the match that he settled four thousand pounds on his daughter, in addition to an excellent house in the Main Street suitable for a doctor's residence; but the girl herself, as beautiful as she was sensible, as virtuous as she was self-helpful, was a treasure more valuable than any pecuniary fortune, even to a young doctor with all his troubles still more or less before him.

Canon O'Darrell heard of the large dowry, though the parties took all reasonable precautions, as they thought, to ensure secrecy; but priests are in very close touch with bankers and solicitors, and they manage to hear the details of all the most important movements in the money market, as well as in the matrimonial market, especially when legal settlements become necessary. Therefore it happened that when Ignatius O'Dowla called to inform the pastor of his approaching marriage, naming the date, and asking what the fee for the due performance of the ceremony would amount to, the pastor said he could not marry "Doctor O'Dowla and Miss Norah O'Brile, Thomas O'Brile's eldest daughter, for less than a hundred pounds."

"But that would be a monstrous imposition, sir!" exclaimed Ignatius, starting up.

"Nonsense, doctor," replied the pastor; "'tis only two an' a half per cent on the cash fortune, an' I often got as much as five an' ten per cent. I have great demands on me in connection with the contract for the new church, especially the spire, claims coming on me every hour o' the day, I may say. I have exsayded, or exceeded the bounds o' prudence in the schames or schemes I have undertaken——"

"But, sir, that is no reason why I should be asked to pay so exorbitant a fee. I could get married in Dublin for a guinea!"

"Not without my leave given in writing, both to you an' to your intinded or intended wife! No priest in Ireland would marry you without that."

"There is the registry office," said Ignatius hotly.

"Oh, yes, if you want to disgrace yourself," said the Canon; "but I doubt if Miss O'Brile or her parents will go so far as that, even to please your independence of spirit."

Ignatius winced. "I brought this ten-pound note with me to give you, sir," he said. "Will you accept it?"

"Indeed, then, I won't," replied Canon O'Darrell, laughing cynically; "you may take it home again."

"Here is a second ten-pound note, sir," said Ignatius. "I now offer you twenty pounds. It is the most I can afford to give."

"I refuse it, doctor," said the priest calmly. "If you have not already done so, I advise you to consult your intended mother-in-law, Mrs. O'Brile." And Canon O'Darrell rose from his chair to signify that the interview should end there and then; and Ignatius left the Parochial House, feeling very indignant.

He informed Norah of what had occurred, and she expressed her willingness to be married at a registry office; but Mrs. O'Brile put a peremptory veto on the suggestion and said that her husband would not only arrange the terms with the priest, but would likewise pay all the expenses. Next day Thomas O'Brile settled the terms with Canon O'Darrell by handing him a cheque for one hundred pounds, dated for the day after that which was fixed for the marriage ceremony.

Meeting Ignatius in the Main Street the same evening, the pastor said: "I'll take that twenty pounds from you, doctor. Tom Brile has arranged his side of the bargain with me like a gentleman, but, of course, that has nothing to do with yourself."

Ignatius was thunderstruck at what appeared to him to be an act of supreme rapacity on the part of Canon O'Darrell.

"You've got the hundred pounds you asked for, sir," said Ignatius. "There is no more to be asked or given."

"Indeed there is, doctor," replied the Canon. "Not one penny of that money comes out o' your pocket, so you needn't take any credit for it! You're a born parishioner o' mine as well as Miss O'Brile, and I have a claim on yerself an' yer parents as well as I have on the O'Briles. Did ye think for a moment ye'd get off without paying a stiver?"

Ignatius called at his father's and told his parents the particulars of his latest interview with the pastor.

"Don't pay it!" said Chevalier O'Dowla firmly.

Mrs. O'Dowla was silent, rocking herself to and fro and occasionally sighing. But, when Ignatius had gone, she went upstairs to her private wardrobe, and, taking out four five-pound-notes, went across to the Parochial House and paid them over to Canon O'Darrell, who gave

her his blessing and promised to celebrate nuptial mass for the young couple at the wedding.

"Unless I'm greatly mistaken," he said, "they'll soon be another wedding in th' O'Dowla family that'll compinsate or compensate me for what I'm losing be this. When it comes to Miss Julia's turn, I'll be expecting a hundred pounds at layst or at least, an' I know, Bridget, that you won't grudge it with your only daughter, especially the good match she'll be makin'. Thomas O'Brile's only son is a prize that any mother might well covet for her child."

"You know, sir, that I wouldn't grudge it to yer reverence," said Mrs. O'Dowla, "but it is John that'll have all to say to the business. I can promise you that whatever sum may be wanting, over an' above what he agrees to give you, to complate the hundred pounds, I'll give it to you meself in instalments out o' me own savings."

Mrs. O'Dowla informed her husband of what Canon O'Darrell had said as to the "prospects of a match between Jule an' Eddie Brile." The Chevalier's brow grew black, and he replied: "I want to hear no more talk about matrimonial expenses at present. I'm after giving Naishy a hundred pounds to help to furnish his new house, besides all that it cost me to give him his profession already. Pup, pup, pup! I don't care if me daughter never got married. In fact, I'd rather she wouldn't, though, he, he, he, in the course of time Eddie will be a wealthy man, and he seems to have a keen eye to business already. Sawnuch and the rest of 'em tell me that, when it comes to a bargain, they'd rather dale with Tom Brile himself than with Eddie, an' no better character of a young man than that could be required."

And so pleased was he with the contemplation of Edward's commercial ability, that he waggled up the street and walked into O'Brile's shop, where he had not been for several years. Mrs. O'Brile was delighted to welcome the Chevalier, and invited him upstairs to the drawing-room, where Miss Norah O'Brile was formally introduced to him for the first time.

"Glory be to God!" exclaimed O'Dowla, when he

beheld her. "It can't be said that the women of Ireland are deteriorating, whatever else we may be backward in. He, he, he, I remember yerself, Mrs. O'Brile, when you were the Belle of Gallowglass; 'tis a good many years ago——"

"Oh, Chevalier!" cried Mrs. O'Brile, laughing, "don't expose my age, for goodness sake!"

"He, he, he! Am I out of order, as the Speaker says," said John O'Dowla. "Well, madam, I'll take the liberty of telling you that you're outshone by your daughter, beautiful as you admittedly were and as you are still." O'Dowla felt in high spirits, for he had not enjoyed any female society for a long time, and it was pleasant beyond measure to look upon Mrs. O'Brile and her daughter.

"Now can I offer you a glass of champagne, Chevalier," said Mrs. O'Brile hospitably.

"I want to see the master," said the Chevalier.

"He's in the wool store," replied Mrs. O'Brile, and she led the way out into the yard and personally conducted the Chevalier to her husband. O'Brile and O'Dowla shook hands cordially, but after the manner of men who made large reservations. After some preliminary skirmishing, in which the state of business, the price of stock, the prospects of Home Rule and further land legislation, and the leading items of local gossip were discussed, John O'Dowla said—

"You have a son as well as a daughter, Tom."

"So I have, John, an' I think you have a daughter as well as a son," replied Thomas O'Brile, with a twinkle in his eye.

"Well, he, he, he," said O'Dowla, swinging his body to and fro. "Thank you, as they say in England, I believe they're not averse to each other."

"If they are, Chevalier," said Mrs. O'Brile, laughing, "appearances must be very deceptive."

"He, he, he," chuckled John O'Dowla. "I'm not a wealthy man, Mrs. O'Brile, but I'll do me part by me only daughter; an' as it would save the priests' time to kill the two birds with one stone, I think we couldn't do better than make a double wedding of it next month."

"How much will you give her?" said Thomas O'Brile.

"Don't mention such a thing," cried his wife. "Ignatius never spoke on the subject to Norah; an' whatever we did, we did it voluntarily. So let Mr. O'Dowla do the same by Julia."

Thomas O'Brile smiled. "There, 'tis all settled for you now, John," he said.

"Very decent, very generous indeed," said O'Dowla; "but I have no objection to saying that I love me daughter best of all I have in the world. I can't do as well for her as you did for your daughter, Tom, but I'll give her a thousand pounds. You know it would be usual elsewhere in a case like Ignatius's, that the young man should pay his father part of whatever fortune he received to recoup the father's outlay on his education and his profession,[1] an' the father could then use that money in fortuning off one of his daughters, or bringing in a cleen-a-shtig." [2]

"Oh, we know all that, Chevleer," said Thomas O'Brile, "but it don't apply in this case! I'm of the same mind as me wife. You can settle the money on yer daughter herself. 'Twill be the safest afterwards. 'Tis well to have something in the wife's name, safe for the rainy day, in case a man's speculations went wrong; but young people never seem to think of such things."

There was a double wedding in the new church at Gallowglass on a fine day towards the end of September, at which Canon O'Darrell transformed Miss Norah O'Brile, the Belle of Gallowglass, into Mrs. Ignatius O'Dowla *alias* Mrs. Doctor O'Dowla, and converted Miss Julia O'Dowla into Mrs. Edward O'Brile. The entire colony of beggars from Mahernacrow were congregated in front of the chapel gates, which Canon O'Darrell had rigorously closed against them, and they attacked the members of the bridal party on their exit like a pack of wolves falling upon a herd of deer. Ignatius O'Dowla threw a handful of silver amongst them, which sent them scrambling and fighting in the dust. When they had renewed the attack, Edward O'Brile dispersed them for the second time with a double handful of shillings and sixpences; and thus the young couples got safely into their carriages.

John O'Dowla had come to church with his pockets full of coppers, including all the bad coins which had found their way into his till for the past twenty years, and he chuckled at the cheapness of his ransom as he sent up spray after spray of deformed and foreign copper pieces, cents, nickels, sous, and counters of every description. A seasoned old mendicant, who knew the Chevalier's little weaknesses well, said : " I won't fight for 'em, Mr. O'Dowla, but I'll hould me tungue, an' I'll call in to yerself in the shop in th' evening."

Thomas O'Brile threw fifty shillings and a hundred sixpences amongst the crowd, and received countless blessings from every quarter.

Though the wedding was called a private one, there was an elaborate early dinner at O'Brile's which was served in four rooms simultaneously, and at which the health of the brides and bridegrooms were drunk to the accompaniment of high-flown speeches from Canon O'Darrell, Messrs. Sporeen, Sawnuch, Wegless, O'Pollards, and McClimber. Then the toast of " Ireland a Nation " was proposed by the pastor and responded to by Chevalier O'Dowla, M.P., supported by his honourable friend Mr. Denis O'Loobera, M.P., who sang " A Nation once Again," and gave " 'Twas a cold winter's night," in response to shrieks of " Angcore " from O'Pollards and Sporeen.

The happy couples went off for their honeymoon by the evening train, spending the first night of their married lives in Cork, proceeding thence to Glengariffe, Kenmare, and Killarney.

While they were away, Daniel O'Rourke accosted Molly Carew in the vegetable garden one evening, and said sheepishly : " Look at here, Mary, I has a few words to spake t' ye. The boss is willin' to make me a kind of a workin' steward out at Ballyglanders at good wages an' perquisites an' a free house, now is the Pinkerrys are after goin' to America. An' what's the use o' carryin' on like this any longer ? I had me weather-eye on yerself long before Master Hugh had anything to do with you—" Here Daniel O'Rourke, as he was now generally called, inserted his knuckles into his eyes, and Molly's breast

DANIEL O'ROURKE AND MOLLY CAREW

"Very well," replied Molly, "when the master offers you the place, tell him you're goin' to marry me in the Presbyterian Church, an' let me know what he says."—p. 525.

heaved like an agitated pond. "An', an', I think you might as well take compassion on me an' be me wife. We're both workers, an' I sees nothing to prevint us from doin' well."

"Will it satisfy you to be married be Mr. McElmore?" said Molly, to whom O'Rourke had previously broken the question of marriage without success.

"It will if it satisfies yerself. What's plazin' to you is plazin' to me," was the immediate answer of the immense young workman, who stood nearly six feet and a half in his brogues.

"Very well," replied Molly; "when the master offers you the place, tell him you're goin' to marry me in the Presbyterian Church, an' let me know what he says."

Some days afterwards Thomas O'Brile spoke on the subject to O'Rourke, who told his master of his intentions with regard to marriage, and Mr. O'Brile, after consultation with Mrs. O'Brile, expressed his approval of the proposed alliance.

Mr. McElmore married the couple quietly, without a fee, on a Saturday afternoon; but the bride and bridegroom did not take up their quarters at Ballyglanders for some weeks afterwards. Father Lawnavawla met O'Rourke as he was going to mass one Sunday, and called him into the Vestry.

"When were you at confession last?" said the curate passionately, in the presence of the altar-boys.

"I disremimbers," said Daniel O'Rourke; "but I'm not at confession now, anyway, an' this is no time to be puttin' such questions to me in public."

"Come in here," said the priest, leading the way into the inner Sacristy, whither O'Rourke followed him.

"I know what you're after doin'," began the priest, shaking his clenched fist in O'Rourke's face.

"I suppose you does," replied O'Rourke cynically.

"I'll read your name from the altar, y' pervert! How dare you show your face at mass after what you did?"

"I didn't change me rilligin," said O'Rourke.

"Will you sign a contract to convert your wife, or yer mistress, back to the true faith an' to bring up all yer

children Catholics if I promise to marry ye here in the church ? " hissed Father Lawnavawla.

" No, I woan not ! " was the firm reply.

" Why didn't you ask the Canon to marry you before you went to that heretic ? " continued the priest.

" Because I knew he wouldn't do it," was the answer.

" When are you going to confession ? " pursued the curate.

" Never again, maybe, if it goes to that," replied O'Rourke.

" See here, you blackguard," said the priest, seeing that he could not move the young man, " let the two of ye come up here to me after mass an' I'll marry ye for a pound to prevent scandal in the parish ! "

" The minister married us for nothing," said O'Rourke.

" He did, for he didn't marry ye at all," retorted Father Lawnavawla.

" Just as fast as yerself could do it, yer reverence," said O'Rourke ; " an', if you says a word agginst him, I won't come to y' to marry us at all." Then the young man added : " I'll try an' scrape up the pound for the sake o' peace and quiteness."

The curate smiled ; and the O'Rourkes were remarried after last mass, to the unfeigned satisfaction of Mrs. O'Brile, who presented Daniel with five pounds as a wedding present, and supplied Molly with all the furniture required for her new home.

[1] In other parts of Ireland, principally in the Midlands, West and North, the fathers get their sons to execute bonds when they reach the age of twenty-one, and while they are still students, binding themselves to pay a specified sum to the father on the day of their marriage, thus almost compelling the young men to marry for money.

[2] A son-in-law who comes to reside with his wife's parents, usually in the case of a daughter who is an only child. A cleen-a-stoch is a son-in-law who takes the bride away to his own house.

CHAPTER XXXIV

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—2 COR. v. 17.

CHEVALIER O'DOWLA retired from Parliament after the defeat of the first Home Rule Bill, and Count Maloney was elected Member for Gallowglass. The Chevalier was then appointed chairman of several local boards, a capacity in which he never missed an opportunity of calling out "Order, order!" as peremptorily as if he were the Speaker of the House of Commons itself. He had the satisfaction of seeing his children prosper; for the young couples passed their days in the practice of virtue and industry, so far as their circumstances permitted. Their paths were strewn with obstacles to well-doing which the inhabitants of more favoured lands find it difficult to realise; but adversity had made them full of that "fear of the Lord" which "tendeth to life," and had relieved them of much of that "fear of man" which "bringeth a snare."

Dr. Ignatius O'Dowla, soon after his marriage, had another painful experience of the antipathy with which the priests regarded him. The resident medical officer of the Gallowglass Infirmary died, and, as the next senior officer, Ignatius had the first claim to the position, which carried a considerable salary as well as a handsome residence and some land. The general opinion in Gallowglass was that there would be no contest, and that Dr. O'Dowla would be appointed as a matter of course. But that delusion was quickly dispelled, for Dr. O'Grauver, who was still unemployed, at once announced himself as a candidate.

The chief supporters of Ignatius O'Dowla were the Chevalier, Thomas O'Brile and Roland Glenpower, aided

in secret by the Protestants. But Dr. O'Grauver had the support of the bishop and all the priests, including even Canon O'Darrell. The independent Nationalist spirit was no longer the potent force which it had been at Ignatius's first election. "The integrity" of the Irish Party had been "sapped and undermined," to quote the words of Mr. Fireframe, who was then beginning to have trouble with his own chief lieutenants, and who no longer commanded the undivided loyalty of his fellow-countrymen. The sacerdotal forces were now working openly and covertly against the Chief, and nowhere was their opposition to him more dangerous and vindictive than in the diocese of Kilmoy.

Chevalier O'Dowla, Thomas O'Brile, and Roland Glenpower remained loyal in their allegiance to Mr. Fireframe, and were, therefore, most obnoxious to the clerical party. The minds of the laity were confused. The Land Acts had failed to realise the sanguine expectations of the farmers, and the labourers were still struggling for new cottages. Legislation, it had been found, could not supply the want of regular industry in the community. Irish produce had lost its place in the British markets, where the Dane, the Norman, and the Colonial now carried off the lion's share of the profits. The people were in a remorseful frame of mind, suffering from a reaction after the undue excitement of the agitation, and were, therefore, plastic material for the religious experts to operate upon.

Under these circumstances the priests redoubled their efforts to concentrate upon themselves the attention of the uneducated masses; and ceremonial succeeded ceremonial, mission followed mission, in quick succession all over the diocese. Constant appeals for money were sent forth from the altars. Gallowglass new church, erected in Bullrush Street and now dominating the town, was dedicated with an amount of pomp and ritual which dazzled the barony of Killafastare.

There were present and officiating at the function the Cardinal himself, the Archbishop of Tara and Lough Neagh, and six bishops. The brass bands, which used to

turn out for Mr. Fireframe and his political friends, now serenaded the Irish-Roman ecclesiastics in whose honour torchlight processions were arranged and public holidays were decreed. A religious pageant, in which the Host was carried under a canopy of cloth of gold by the Cardinal, marched through the Main Street. The "Prince of the Church," as the newspapers styled him, resplendent in his red hat and robes; the archbishop; the six bishops; the hundreds of priests of all ranks; the confraternities of surpliced boys and little girls in white; the thousands of grown men, mostly labourers, with red ribbons and medals suspended round their necks; all constituted a display of supernatural power by which those who beheld it felt overawed.

Father Lawnavawla rushed out of the procession and knocked Mr. McCameron's hat off his head, because the unimaginative Scotchman did not remove it when the Cardinal, bearing the Host, was passing the Distillery Road. The luxuries supplied from Canon O'Darrell's larder at the evening banquet eclipsed all the previous records of hospitality achieved at the Parochial House.

In fine, religion was rampant in Gallowglass, and, of all the townsfolk, the O'Dowlas and the O'Briles seemed to be the only people uninfected by the contagion of delirium. Both families stood aloof from the proceedings, and when they surveyed all the superstition and ritualism by which they were surrounded, the feeling uppermost in their minds was a thrill of disgust at such a debasement of Christianity to the level of fetichism. Even Mrs. O'Dowla, though she attended the devotions, had "lost the faith" so far as to abstain from spending any money on masses "for special intentions," or on the other religious indulgences in which there was such a colossal boom.

It was when this fervour was at its height, shortly after the solemn dedication of Gallowglass new church, that the election of medical officer for the infirmary took place, and Ignatius O'Dowla was ignominiously defeated by the incompetent Doctor O'Grauver.

Ignatius bore his disappointment in the manner in

which a man ought to take such misadventures, but, none the less, he keenly felt the defeat. It was especially irritating to have to defer continually to the incapable O'Grauver as his superior officer, and to behold flagrant dereliction of duty always in progress which he was powerless to abate. A short time after the election, it so chanced that Doctor O'Dowla received a letter from a friend who had been a fellow-student with him, first at Gallowglass and afterwards at the Queen's College, a member of the Church of Ireland, as were almost all the pupils at Gallowglass School, who, when he had obtained his medical degree, had gone to practise in Lancashire. Ignatius's defeat had been thought worthy of extended notice in the columns of the *Manchester Gauger* for the delectation of the Irish priests and people of Lancashire; and his friend, having thus come to hear of it, now wrote to Ignatius to tell how exceedingly well he was doing in the metropolis of the cotton trade. He informed Ignatius that a practice, likely to prove of considerable value in the hands of an active young man, was just then to be sold in Yorkshire; and he strongly recommended Ignatius "to shake the dust of priest-ridden Ireland off his shoes and come to fresh fields and pastures new in Merrie England, where most men are judged entirely on their merits."

Ignatius's mind being in a receptive mood, he immediately consulted his wife, and the fair Norah, having encouraged him to act upon the suggestion, he took counsel with his friend, the rector of Gallowglass, and set out for Manchester. Young Dr. Bolton accompanied him to Yorkshire, and Ignatius there and then purchased the practice on satisfactory terms.

His success was greater than he had dared to expect; and, before two years had elapsed, Doctor O'Dowla's appearance and equipage were as well known in all the principal thoroughfares of the great Yorkshire city as if he had been a native millionaire. He made no effort to cultivate the support of the local Irish colony, whom he discerned to be people of the same type as those he had left in Gallowglass. He rested his claim to public

patronage solely on his merits as a physician. His fees were necessarily low in the capital of thrifty Yorkshire, but his patients were many and the cost of living was moderate; and his income reached a thousand pounds in the second year.

He made many friends, for the educated Irish are generally popular in England; the beauty, tact, and good nature of his young wife being assets almost as valuable in his stock-in-trade as his own steadiness, ability, and industry.

He rejected all the overtures of the local Catholic priests, all Irishmen, who waylaid him at the outset of his career. And although they hung on to his flanks persistently, neither he nor his wife attended mass, or took any part in Catholic sacrifice or ritual.

"Is it not rank hypocrisy," said Ignatius to his wife, "to participate in a sacrifice which purports to be a recrucifixion of Christ, and which is implicitly believed to be such and paid for as such by one's poor fellow-countrymen, when one no longer believes in it? The ritualistic Paganism forced upon the children in the schools is the cause of all Ireland's trouble. Englishmen and Scotchmen ask me the question, 'Why don't you Irish give up that religion? Why continue in chains when you may be free?' What answer can I make, if I myself go to mass, as if it were a bounden duty, and thereby admit the superhuman powers of the priests? Have I not as much right to spiritual development as an Englishman or Scotchman? And how can I advance if I mix myself up with that herd of people half-superstitious, half-hypocritical, who crowd into the Roman Catholic chapels on Sundays? We who have found the truth should not be induced to pander to error through attachment to our kindred who still worship at the shrine of falsehood. We should cling to the light, of which we have obtained a glimpse with so much difficulty. And above all we should transmit that light to our children, and should not commit the crime of condemning them to the bottomless pit from which we have escaped."

"I agree with you, Surgeon-General O'Dowla," said his

beautiful Norah, blushing through her smiles, like the charming young Irishwoman that she was. "And as I happen to have a particularly stylish hat and dress, thanks to your kindness, I suggest that we should go to church to-morrow!"

"Agreed!" cried Ignatius. "But we shall go there with a much higher motive than that, I hope."

And on the following day, which was the Sabbath, the young couple attended a place of worship for the first time for two years.

They enjoyed the plainness of the Church of England service, and found it hard to restrain their tears during the hymn-singing; and as they noted the content, prosperity, orderliness and independence of the congregation, they could not avoid recalling the terrified looks and idolatrous gestures of the people with whom they had been accustomed to worship in Ireland.

"Oh!" exclaimed Ignatius that afternoon, standing in the cloisters of Kirkstall Abbey, and gazing upon the bright current of the Aire flowing placidly on its course through its own spacious, picturesque, and well-tilled valley, "Oh, may this ruin never be restored, and may this country forever remain free! Those broken arches, crumbled ceilings, and untenanted halls are a testimony that the baneful influence of the sacrificing priest has been trodden under foot in England! Would that it may yet be so in Ireland!"

"It is something to be thankful for that we have escaped it," said his happy wife. "Come out of this dark, heart-chilling place, this paradise made by selfish, idolatrous men, in the midst of general misery, to shut out the light of Heaven from their own evil doings!"

And they walked forth under the blue and white canopy of heaven, under one of those skies which Gainsborough and Constable loved to paint, and enjoyed the spacious Yorkshire scenery as keenly as they used to delight in Caherconlish and the Valley of the Ounacurra.

When Ignatius's exacting professional duties allowed him to take a brief holiday, he and his wife went to Harrogate for a week; and to their astonishment they

found a phalanx of Irish priests indulging themselves in all the leading hotels there, dining up to a late hour, and behaving themselves altogether as if they were wealthy laymen who had nothing to do on earth but to spend their money on their own sensual comfort. So embarrassed was Ignatius at the spectacle, knowing, as he did, the methods by which those priests obtained their means at home, that when his stay at Harrogate was at an end he determined never to revisit it. But he afterwards discovered that, wherever he went to for his holiday, he was sure to find the Irish priest in possession before him, living on the fat of the land.

Now Thomas O'Brile had been in the habit of coming to Bradford annually to sell his wool, and therefore it came to pass that he and Mrs. O'Brile paid a visit to their daughter not long after Ignatius and Norah had settled in Yorkshire. And in the following year Mr. O'Brile entrusted his son and junior partner, Edward, with the important duty of selling an unusually large quantity of wool at Bradford. Having discharged the business entirely to his satisfaction, Mr. Edward O'Brile, accompanied by his wife, visited his sister; and so impressed was Julia with the comfort and prosperity of Doctor O'Dowla's establishment that she urged her husband to try and settle in Yorkshire. Her husband, being usually of the same opinion as his wife, it was decided that Julia's suggestion should be acted upon. Nor was an opportunity slow in coming. Edward O'Brile now visited Bradford once or twice a year regularly, and the firm which always bought his wool consented to take him into partnership on condition that he invested a certain sum of money in the business. These negotiations being successfully completed, Mr. and Mrs. Edward O'Brile bade good-bye to Gallowglass and settled in Bradford.

Edward was sent on a voyage to Australia in connection with the wool trade, and during his absence Julia stayed with Ignatius and Norah, and even accompanied them to church. On her husband's return he rose so rapidly in the esteem of his superiors that his income soon exceeded that of his brother-in-law, Doctor O'Dowla, and

he and his wife lived in what Gallowglass people would call "great style entirely."

"Eddie," said Julia, as they sat at breakfast one Sunday morning, for she still retained a *soupçon* of the dogmatism of her younger days, "we are living like heathens without any religion!"

"Well, ma'am," replied her husband, whose mind was full of business, "it does not seem to be disagreeing with us. Going to church for half-an-hour on Sundays does not necessarily constitute a Christian."

"Excuse me, Edward, but I think a little external Christianity might be blended with this business life with advantage——"

"To both?" he interrupted, with assumed gravity.

"No," replied his wife seriously, "with advantage to the business life only. During my visit to Norah, while you were at the Antipodes, investigating the manners and customs of the squatters, I saw how pleasantly Ignatius and she spent their Sundays, and what a nice circle of elevating Christian society Norah moved in and——"

"And, in fine, you want to do likewise," laughed her husband.

"Quite so!" said Julia, with a pert toss of her pretty head.

"A woman is like a sheep," said Edward O'Brile, "she follows the sheep that goes before her."

"Granted!" was the retort of his wife; "but you must follow the sheep in your turn, or you will get no wool, Mr. Wool-buyer!"

And Julia had her way, for her husband obeyed her as implicitly as her father did in the old days when she had just emerged from the convent boarding-school.

Mrs. O'Dowla was not informed of her children's change of religion, but Mr. and Mrs. O'Brile and the Chevalier knew of it and expressed no disapproval; while Gallowglass remained discreetly silent on so grave a question, which, being directly concerned with "faith and morals," was outside the province of the laity. Nor did Canon O'Darrell once allude to it, though he continued to call occasionally on his devoted client, Mrs. O'Dowla.

Things had gone well with the Canon from a professional point of view. The precise sum which came into his hands as residuary legatee under Miss Penser's will was £7250. Of this he gave the bishop, according to promise, £1000; he spent £2250 on his new church; and he invested the balance, drawing out a sum of £1000 from time to time in small amounts, for the purpose of increasing his popularity with the parish priests of the diocese, but he disavowed all intention of seeking thereby to win their votes when the expected vacancy occurred in the see.

At length Doctor O'Grenaghan breathed his last, Dean Linch was elected Vicar-Capitular of the diocese, and the parish priests were summoned to a conclave in the cathedral soon after for the selection of three names to be forwarded to Rome. There were forty-five voters present at the conclave; Canon O'Darrell received thirty-nine votes and was placed *dignissimus;* Doctor O'Keefe received five votes and was placed *dignior;* and Dean Linch received one vote, which rumour said was his own. Those lewd people, the laity, had no voice in the proceedings.[1]

Then Canon O'Darrell despatched a golden letter to a friend in Rome, with whom he had been in communication for some time, enclosing a cheque of even date for £1000, and a second cheque for a like amount post-dated two months. It was, in Canon O'Darrell's opinion, one of those moments when "the kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence and the violent bear it away." He calculated that the vacancy must be filled up before two months and was resolved to stop payment of the second cheque if he were not appointed to the see. But he and his mysterious friend at court must have acted without consulting their Italian hosts; for three months elapsed, the second cheque was cashed, and yet no decision was given by the Propaganda; and in the interval sinister rumours reached Gallowglass that Doctor O'Keefe, or an unknown Irish priest from Rome, was to be appointed.

Then Canon O'Darrell rose to the occasion and sent a promissory note to his friend for £1000 payable at sight in three months, "in case I, James O'Darrell, shall be appointed Bishop of Kilmoy in the meantime." It stands

on record that a high mass, paid for by Mrs. Sawnuch, Mrs. O'Pollards, Mrs. Wegless, and Mrs. Sporeen, was celebrated in Gallowglass chapel on the very day of the despatch of this note to Rome, and it is a fact well known to all the members of the families mentioned that the special intention of those pious ladies, jointly expressed to Canon O'Darrell himself in writing, in having the mass offered up, was "that God might be pleased to secure the appointment of Canon O'Darrell to the see of Kilmoy."

The Canon, who celebrated the mass, never prayed so fervently in his life; and it is a singularly convincing proof of the efficacy of such expiatory sacrifices that the formal letter appointing the Most Reverend James, Doctor O'Darrell, to "the episcopal throne of Kilmoy," as the newspapers put it, reached the hands of the Vicar-Capitular within a fortnight—much to the disgust of Dean Linch and the indignation of Father O'Skeerd, who would have been pleased to see the most complete outsider elevated to the episcopacy rather than his life-long opponent "Jimmy O'Darrell."

The £16,000, devised by old Miss Penser for the foundation of a home for "aged Catholic females in distress," was still lying in bank, for the executors had not been able to secure Bishop O'Grenaghan's consent to any of the schemes they propounded.[2] The Earl of Gallowglass renounced his executorship and Canon O'Darrell thereby obtained absolute control over the disposition of the money, inasmuch as the manager of the National Bank, the third executor, dared not oppose the Canon.

One of Bishop O'Darrell's first official acts was to apply to the Court of Chancery to have the trusts of the will amended, so that the £16,000 might be divided, under the Bishop's direction, amongst "existing charitable institutions in the diocese of Kilmoy" in return for their undertaking to provide for "aged Catholic females in distress." After a prolonged hearing, in which a host of barristers were engaged, the Court granted the application, with full costs on the higher scale to all parties, and the judge pronounced a warm eulogium on the piety, wisdom, and self-sacrifice of the newly consecrated Lord Bishop of Kilmoy.

John O'Dowla and his wife, though deprived of all their children, were by no means disconsolate—such bereavements are only too common in Irish towns. When "his lordship," Doctor O'Darrell, appointed Father Lawnavawla to succeed him as parish priest of Gallowglass, the Chevalier readjusted his relations with the Parochial House.

"See, Bridget," said John O'Dowla to his wife, "we're after havin' a bitter experience o' priests' interference in our family affairs, so I mean to be civil an' strange with Father Lawnavawla, just that an' no more, an' I hope you'll make it your business to be the same, ma'am, pup-pup-pup-pup-poo!"

"I never cared for him meself," replied Mrs. O'Dowla. "I'll do me rilligious duty as usual, of course; but, as long as I live an' have the health, I'll drive over to Kilmoy a' Christmas an' Aister an' make me confession to the Bishop. It don't matter where a body gets the sacrament o' Penance, so long as they receives the Blessed Eucharist in their own parish. God direct us!"

"You have mighty little feeling for our horses," said the Chevalier, "when you can speak of covering twenty miles o' road to get what can be had at your own door. You ought to encourage home manufacture."

"I'd like to gover the same road as poor Hugh did the last time he—" And Mrs. O'Dowla's eyes rained forth a flood of tears into her apron, whereat the Chevalier, choking and utterly discomfited, left the room.

Mrs. O'Dowla could not be induced to visit her children in Yorkshire. "What 'ud I do," she would say, "if I died on the road? I might lose me soul as well as me body, for, maybe, the graces an' indulgences I have obtained mightn't apply out of holy Ireland!"

But Chevalier O'Dowla paid frequent visits to Yorkshire in company with Thomas and Mrs. O'Brile, and each time he returned he delighted Gallowglass with his accounts of England and the English.

"Everybody has everything o' their own there," he said; "they don't borrow at all from one another!"

"Why, then?" said Roland Glenpower, "isn't that very selfish an' onsociable?"

"An' you'll hear nothing but 'Thank you,' 'Thank you' all day long amongst the better classes like ourselves. But I must admit that the Yorkshire people aren't as insipid as the Londoners in that respect. See, I used to be quite surprised when I heard the first curse, or the first 'You lie,' or 'Don't be bothering me,' or 'Thonamondeel' when I returned to Ireland!"

"Begor, they must be onnatural people, sir," said Sporeen. "I think I'd turn around an' gout o' me skin, if I couldn't lave off a bit of a curse or a saucy word now an' then!"

"An' everybody is always at work," went on the Chevalier. "See, always, mind you! They seem to like it, an' they don't be complaining at having to do it. They do it, amossa, an' no more about it. 'Tis the resting afterwards they don't seem to care for, an' they're twice as polite at their work as when they're idle!"

"Wonderful, d'ye see that now?" cried Mr. Wegless. "I b'lieve 'tis all ale, or beer, as they calls it, that they mostly lives on."

"An' there's no beggars," continued the Chevalier. "Begor, I felt quite lonesome not to be asked for a penny for God's sake anywhere I went!"

"No wander," said Sawnuch. "'Tis a case in point, showin' how onnatural for an Irishman it is to live among Protestans. A priest told me wanst that th' English b'lieves in Faith without good works, an', as they have lost the Faith now, they have nothing at all left! Sure 'twould aise a man's mind to throw a copper to a poor person off an' on!"

"Yes; or to turn around an' tell um you'd give it to um the next time," said Sporeen.

Discussing such points with his father and his father-in-law during one of their many visits, Ignatius said: "The British people and, so far as I know, all the other Reformed Christian peoples have got some good out of Christianity; the Roman Catholic peoples have got none. I take it that, by the phrase 'accepting salvation,' one means imitating, so far as one may, the conduct of Christ on earth. People say that Christianity is preached but

never practised in Great Britain. I disagree with that statement. What is the source of all the characteristic British virtues, patience, silence under wrong, forgetfulness of injuries, universal courtesy, prevalence of the 'soft answer' and the 'word of reconciliation' which turneth away wrath, strenuous attention to the business in hand, and many others? I find the mainspring of them all in the practical adoption of Christ's teaching; and, taken as a whole, I believe the British people, whether English, Scotch, or Welsh, to be 'doers of the Word' rather than speakers of it."

"That is what I like most in them," said Norah. "They do so much and say so little."

"It is the same amongst the Reformed Christians of Ireland," said Ignatius; "but it is so different amongst our Catholic Irish, whose faults are a negation of Christianity. Observe our national impatience, our querulousness under wrong, our remembrance of injuries, our universal discourteousness to one another, our Irish tongue that no man can tame, 'an unruly evil full of deadly poison,' the general neglect of the business in hand, and all the rest of our shortcomings. I do not deny that we have amiable qualities. A good Irishman or Irishwoman is, in my opinion, unsurpassable; but I do say that our virtues, as a body politic, are submerged by our failings, and we derive no benefit from them. To what first cause may our deficiencies be ascribed more rationally or truthfully than to our ignorance of Christ? Ireland has many grievances, but none lies so heavy on her, in my opinion, as her ignorance of the true meaning of Christianity."

"That's too deep for me," said Chevalier O'Dowla; "I always leave theology to the clergy."

"The waters of theology may be too deep, or rather too muddy for you, sir," was his son's reply, "but a child may understand the words and teachings of Christ. Never, perhaps, was the Irish position put more clearly and truly than by Carlyle when he said that our history 'does not form itself into a picture, but remains only as a huge blot, an indiscriminate blackness, which the human

memory cannot willingly charge itself with.' He describes us as 'unveracious, violent, disobedient men' in Cromwell's time. Have we not shown ourselves unregenerate during the late Agitation by which all have suffered? Ours is still 'a just, though very intricate claim; but entered upon and prosecuted by such methods as were never yet available for asserting any claim in this world. Treachery and massacre' still in use, 'what could come of it? No want of daring, or of patriotism, so-called; but a great want of other things.' To me it appears that what we chiefly want is the spirit of Christ. We are 'false in speech;—alas, false in thought first of all.' But on what subject are we more false in thought than on the teaching of Christ? In explanation of our continued failure, the rough-tongued Scot says the Irish Catholics 'have never let the Fact tell its own harsh story to them; have always said to the harsh Fact: *Thou art not that way, thou art this way!*' May we not turn that phrase and, applying it to spiritual things, assert that the Irish Catholics 'have never let the Fact of Christianity tell its own gentle story to them; have always said to the gentle Fact: *Thou art not that way, thou art this way!* The Fact, of course, asserts that it *is* that way; and Irish projects end in perpetual discomfiture'?"

And the elder men were silent, for indeed they had no answer to make; but Norah said cheerfully: "The Irish cause still lives. Let us glory in our tribulations if we will; but he that plougheth should plough in hope; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

[1] Laity was originally an epithet of disrespect, meaning lewd or common people.

[2] Large sums for similar purposes are still left by old ladies in Ireland. It was only in the year 1903 a case came before the Courts, in which £50,000 had been left by the relative of a deceased priest for the establishment of a Catholic orphanage in the North of Ireland.

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